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THE Nation

AMERICA'S LEADING LIBERAL WEEKLY SINCE 1865

VOLUME 152 NEW YORK · SATURDAY · APRIL 12, 1941 NUMBER 15

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Published weekly and copyright, 1941, in the U. S. A. by The Nation, Inc., 55 Fifth Avenue, New York, N. Y. Washington Bureau: 856 National Press Building, Washington, D. C. Entered as second-class matter, December 13, 1879, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., under the act of March 3, 1879.

# *The Shape of Things*

IN THE SPRING OF 1936 THE PROUD LEGIONS of the resurgent Roman Empire marched into Addis Ababa. Benito Mussolini's son wrote poetically of the beauties of bombing Ethiopians to bits; British statesmen mumbled something about sanctions, and piously washed their hands; the League of Nations wagged a finger and averted its gaze; the Lion of Judah, dignified and moving in exile, warned the statesmen of England and France that their turn would come; and a Fascist official in Rome explained languidly to a correspondent of *The Nation:* "Empires come and empires go, and Britain's day is done." Now, just five years later, the empire of the New Rome lies in shreds, the League of Nations is one with the dodo, the bumbling statesmen of London and Paris are gone with their wind, their cities attacked with more fury than Benito's son could ever visit on the towns of Ethiopia, and Addis Ababa makes ready for the homecoming of the prophetic Lion of Judah. To complete the irony, the representatives of the empire whose "day is done" are thanked by the Italian Viceroy of Ethiopia for their "protection of the women and children of Addis Ababa." By their conduct, adds the Duke of Aosta, the British demonstrate "that strong bonds of humanity and race still exist between our nations." These are not the words of a belligerent; they sound like the words of the Italian people, who never had the heart to kill and be killed to make an empire for a megalomaniac.

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AT THE BACK OF ITALY'S DEFEATS THERE is an extraordinary "dry-rot" infecting every domestic institution, according to the reports of Savile R. Davis and John T. Whitaker, two American correspondents who have recently left Rome. This does not mean, however, that Italy is on the point of overthrowing Mussolini and suing for peace. That Hitler cannot allow, and he is rapidly replacing the deadwood of Italian fascism with graftings from his sturdier Nazi tree. This process was facilitated by the nervous paralysis which afflicted not only the country but Il Duce as the Italian armed forces sustained one blow after another. German infiltrations into the police and propaganda departments are

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particularly noticeable, Mr. Whitaker tells us in the New York *Post,* and one result is a drive to work up popular resentment against the United States with the argument that Italy would be enjoying the fruits of victory but for American interference. Mr. Davis, writing in the *Christian Science Monitor,* emphasizes the breakdown in military morale and organization. He confirms reports that the invasion of Greece was ordered against the advice of Marshal Badoglio and the general staff, who knew how ill-prepared the army was. But the fact that they were proved right did not save them: on the contrary, defeat was used by Farinacci and the pro-Nazi Fascists as a lever to force out the veteran commander-in-chief. Mr. Davis has an amazing story to tell about the utter failure of the supply organization in Albania. Regiments were sent into the bitterly cold mountains in summer clothing. Many were without arms or had weapons lacking essential parts and, while food piled up at the ports, the front lines had nothing to eat for days. Even more striking is his report on the boasted Italian air force which, he says, is fighting with out-of-date machines manned by half-trained pilots.

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AN ADDITIONAL BURDEN ON SHIPPING WILL be imposed by the outbreak of war in the Balkans. If effective resistance is to be offered against the latest German drive, tremendous quantities of war materials will have to flow continuously to the Greek ports. The presence of German dive bombers in Sicily makes transportation through the Mediterranean precarious, while the long route around the Cape of Good Hope is time-consuming and thereby wasteful of shipping resources. British shipping losses for the last month have been at the rate of approximately 5,000,000 tons a year, or more than double the present capacity of British and American shipbuilding facilities. The $500,000,000 allocation from the lease-lend fund announced by President Roosevelt last week will make up part, but only part, of the deficiency. More immediate assistance is required. Use of the Danish vessels recently seized by the Coast Guard should be of minor aid. But the chief, and as yet unsolved, problem is that of cutting down the number of sinkings. This apparently can be achieved only by the use of a substantial number of the light naval vessels now attached to the United States Navy. We have a choice either of undertaking the hazardous task of convoying our own merchant ships or of releasing a number of destroyers and light cruisers to Britain. It is obvious that this decision cannot be long delayed.

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ORGANIZED LABOR, PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT, and the assorted government mediators and conciliators are all, in our opinion, being unfair, not to say unkind, to the press. The headline-makers, who often appear not to have read the stories beneath, no sooner get worked up over a strike or the threat of a strike that will undoubtedly "cripple" the defense program than a conciliator settles the dispute, or a union agrees not to interrupt production during negotiations, or the President says that the trouble will be settled within a day or two—and, what is even more inconsiderate, proves to be a good prophet. The horrendous coal strike materialized only faintly, in a week-end stoppage, followed by a union victory—which indicates that the union demands were not exactly subversive; the threat of a steel strike faded almost before the headlines were dry. The spectacle of the press on the end of a hysterical limb would be amusing if headlines were not so influential and if they were not so obviously motivated by a determination to brand labor as a fifth column, bent only on disrupting defense and persecuting innocent employers like Henry Ford. Labor is not perfect, and it is unquestionably taking advantage of its collective bargaining position; but it would be refreshing if for once the press admitted that employers have also been known to make hay while the defense sun shines. It is not labor's fault if it has to fight publicly for its gains, while employers haggle over contracts in quiet conferences that don't make "news."

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ONCE AGAIN THE "GOOD NEIGHBOR" POLICY has been jeopardized by irresponsible Congressional action. Under pressure from sectional livestock interests great efforts are being made on Capitol Hill to forbid purchases for the armed forces of imported canned meat and wool. Two weeks ago there was a tied vote in the Senate on a motion to strike from the Navy Supply bill a House provision prohibiting the purchase of a small quantity of Argentine canned beef. The situation was saved only when Senator Russell of Georgia explained that his vote in favor of the deletion had been wrongly recorded. The House then voted into the Supplemental Defense Appropriation bill a provision proscribing the purchase of foreign food or clothing for the army unless such supplies were not produced in the United States or not produced in sufficient quantities. The Senate first approved this proposal but later agreed on a compromise offered by Senator Adams permitting the head of the department concerned to buy such articles from foreign sources if home supplies are insufficient, of unsatisfactory quality, or offered at unreasonable prices. It is a matter of record that canned beef is produced in this country in quantities quite insufficient to meet normal demands and that the Argentine product can be purchased far more cheaply, even allowing for the stiff tariff. Nor are we anywhere near self-supporting in the matter of raw wool. Indeed, the dangers of a serious shortage of this raw material have induced the Administration to build up a stock-pile from imported supplies. Thus, if Con-

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gress succeeds in barring the government from the use of foreign meat and wool, the result must be that the taxpayers will be charged higher prices. Even more serious is the rebuff to Argentina, most influential and least trustful of our Latin-American neighbors.

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IMMEDIATE ATTENTION FOR MIGRATORY workers who are swarming to defense centers in search of jobs was urged last week by the special House committee appointed to study that problem. The report, unfortunately, received little attention in the press and so far has been completely disregarded by a Congress which seems to be concerned chiefly with throttling organized labor. Observers in Washington report that the welfare aspects of the defense program are in a state of utter confusion. The well-intentioned efforts of Charles P. Taft, Assistant Coordinator of Health and Welfare, have been thwarted by red tape and overlapping in the division of authority. As a result the situation in the defense centers is rapidly moving from bad to worse. Mr. Taft estimates that the total of the defense migrants may reach 5,000,000. Only a minority of these will obtain jobs, and all constitute a potential problem when the emergency ends. As a fundamental solution, the committee recommends the setting up of a fourth category of public assistance under the Social Security Act to care for non-settled persons. The establishment of such a scheme, unfortunately, would take at least a year. Meanwhile, Congress must deal with the growing problems of 1941.

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THE CONVICTION OF THE AMERICAN MEDICAL Association and the Medical Society of the District of Columbia for violation of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act may stand as a milestone in the struggle for a more satisfactory system of financing medical care. For years the organized power of the A. M. A. has blocked experimentation with methods for bringing adequate medical service within the reach of the low- and middle-income groups. The rank and file of physicians have been effectively kept from participation in new schemes by threats of blacklisting. Until recently it had been assumed that a progressive physician had no means of redress against these tactics. But the present conviction, coupled with the Supreme Court's recent decision holding that the medical profession conducts a "trade" within the meaning of the anti-trust law, provides a legal weapon for combatting A. M. A. pressure. It should also go far in wrecking its pretense of infallibility in matters regarding medical economics. The upholding of the conviction by the Supreme Court will probably be followed by a wave of new schemes for a more democratic and economical organization of medical service through the country.

THE CURRENT TIDE AGAINST EDUCATION, which has been running strong in all sections of the country, has wrought havoc in New York in recent weeks. Not content with a 2 per cent blanket cut in educational funds at the last session of the legislature, the Republican minority reduced the state appropriation for the schools by another $250,000 in the session just ended. Having taken this action on the plea of urgent economy, the legislature voted $247,000 for the notorious Rapp-Coudert investigating committee, with a view to effecting further "economies" in the schools. The legislature also adopted a Coudert bill directed against mentally unfit teachers, although rejecting Governor Lehman's plea for a $50,000,000 bond issue for erection of new state mental hygiene institutions. In New York City, Mayor La Guardia, probable candidate for reelection on the Republican ticket, eliminated 1,200 teaching and administrative positions from next year's education budget at an estimated savings of $2,500,000. The economies involve discontinuing the Townsend Harris High School, which has the highest standards of any high school in the city, and the abolition of the post of director of the Bureau of Children with Retarded Mental Development. Night schools, particularly of the secondary grade, also came in for drastic cuts. The restoration of day classes in English and citizenship, sought by the Board of Education, was refused. Some reduction in school budgets may be justified on the basis of the declining numbers of children in the elementary schools, but the attack on the progressive and specialized branches of education, particularly adult and citizenship training, is a disquieting sign of the times.

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THE LAUNCHING OF A UNITED CHINA RELIEF drive coordinating the fund-raising activities of a half-dozen or more independent committees offers hope that China will at last get a measure of the aid it deserves from this country. Despite the existence of a number of hard-working committees, American assistance to date has been negligible as compared either with the need or with the aid given Britain or Greece. The new combined drive, headed by James G. Blaine, has as its goal the raising of $5,000,000 by July 31. Wendell Willkie, speaking at the dinner which inaugurated the campaign, declared that the Chinese have "withstood bombings the like of which not even the brave men of Britain have had to endure." He could have added that they have done so, as Mr. Stone pointed out last week, not only without aid from the Western world but in face of continued large-scale American assistance to Japan. The present campaign offers an opportunity for those of us who are ashamed of our equivocal policy in the Far East to do our bit to offset the effects of that policy. It will help to repair the human lives shattered by bombs carried to their

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destination by American gasoline. Five million dollars is very inadequate penance for the aid we have extended to Japan, but it is better than none.

# Battle of the Balkans

BERLIN has already found it necessary to issue a warning that the situation in the Balkans is not favorable for a *Blitzkrieg* victory. The terrain hinders mechanized warfare. Both Greece and Yugoslavia are fully united and determined to resist to the bitter end; and the fact that circumstances have made surprise impossible means that Britain and its allies have had time to take counter-measures. But, even if Germany overcomes these handicaps and succeeds in its objective of driving the British into the sea, it will still have suffered a setback by being forced to fight to obtain complete ascendancy in southeastern Europe. For while Hitler is fighting the Battle of the Balkans he cannot exert his full strength in the Battle of Britain. Yet that remains the crucial front where he must conquer if he is to achieve final victory.

When the Nazis claim that their intentions in regard to the Balkan states have always been to encourage the maintenance of peace, they have spoken the truth, accepting their rather peculiar definition of such words as peace and neutrality. They wanted to maintain this region with its exportable surpluses of mineral and agricultural products as a supply depot safely removed from the hazards of war. They knew, too, that they could not move very far toward the southeast without stepping on Russian toes and thus endangering another important economic connection. How considerable this second risk is remains to be seen. But Moscow has felt obliged to exhibit its displeasure at German encroachments by rebuking Bulgaria, and by signing pacts of friendship with Turkey and Yugoslavia, the one threatened by Nazi aggression and the other actually experiencing it at the moment the Soviet gesture was made. These steps may be purely platonic, and Moscow, while condemning German actions on a moral plane, may condone them materially by continuing to supply the *Luftwaffe* with oil. After all, it has a pretty good precedent in this country's ambiguous attitude toward Japan.

There can be little doubt that all the Balkan states, whatever their sympathies or antipathies, were ready enough to accommodate themselves to Hitler's plans and remain neutral. They all agreed to expand deliveries to Germany and they all gave facilities to German agents and propaganda. Thus the Nazis might have gained their ends without military occupation of the Balkans apart from Rumania, had not Mussolini made his colossal blunder in attacking Greece. This move, dictated, no doubt, by jealousy of German successes and a desire to obtain a cheap victory, ranks among the worst miscalculations in history. For not only did Italy find that in invading Greece it had plunged its hand into a hornet's nest, but it provided Britain with an opportunity to establish naval ascendancy in the Mediterranean and to assume the offensive in North Africa.

As a result of the blows his partner had sustained, Hitler was obliged to revamp his plans and go to the rescue. Bulgaria capitulated easily enough and Germany then appeared perfectly placed to obtain from Yugoslavia what von Ribbentrop calls "close cooperation"—the unity of purpose that exists between a boa-constrictor and the rabbit it has hypnotized. But Yugoslavia, like Greece, turned out to be one of those unregenerate animals which, when attacked, defend themselves, and it refused to accept the role assigned to it.

So now Hitler finds himself compelled to fight on a battleground which is not of his own choosing. He has, to be sure, certain advantages. In order to supply and reinforce its army in Greece, Britain must rely on long and dangerous sea routes while the Germans enjoy interior lines of communication. On the other hand, the Nazi forces must depend on the inadequate and already overburdened railroad systems of Hungary, Rumania, and Yugoslavia or else on the even more primitive highways of these countries. So far as numbers are concerned, the two sides are fairly evenly matched but Germany has certainly an edge as regards equipment. In the matter of mechanized weapons this handicap may not prove so serious for the allied armies: German superiority in the air is far more dangerous. In Albania the Italians never have been able to establish command of the skies, and many of their troubles stem from that fact. But the Nazis seem to have moved a very considerable part of their air power to the Balkans (the comparatively light raids on Britain in the last two weeks are significant), and they are evidently attempting to knock out their opponents' air forces at the start. If they are as successful in this effort as they were in Poland, they will have gone a long way toward winning the campaign.

One of the chief strategical disadvantages of the German army in this campaign is the precarious position of its Italian ally in Albania. Already one Yugoslav army has launched an attack on the Italian rear, and if the German onslaught at the head of the Struma valley and in eastern Yugoslavia can be checked for a short time, Mussolini's legions may be pushed into the Adriatic.

It is not possible, however, to discuss the strategy of the Balkan campaign without some reference to the situation in North Africa, where German reinforcement of the Italian army, now under the command of General Gariboldi, has recaptured Bengazi. This move may be intended chiefly to divert British attention from the Balkans, but it is clear that General Wavell cannot afford to strip this front of troops. However, hot weather and the water supply problem are likely to check Axis opera-

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tions and meanwhile British victories in East Africa will probably free for service in Libya the Indian divisions who have borne the brunt of the fighting in Eritrea.

It will certainly be days, and it may be weeks, before it will be possible to discern how the fortunes of war are swaying on the vast new fronts which opened with the Nazi attack on Greece and Yugoslavia on Palm Sunday. If Hitler wins rapidly in this theater, he will be able to turn back to the Battle of Britain with a real chance of success. But if he is forced to fight along this line the whole summer, he will enter the third winter of war with his chances of victory shrunk to vanishing point.

# *Business International*

THE settlement of the Allis-Chalmers strike is good news. It clears away what the President himself has termed the only serious stoppage in the defense program. It is too much to hope that a press intent on whipping up anti-labor hysteria will now desist from its efforts, but the truth will nevertheless begin to trickle through to the public. The Allis-Chalmers strike would never have occurred if the company involved had dealt fairly with a union which admittedly represents a majority of its employees. The strike would have been over a month ago if the company had joined the union in accepting the OPM formula for settlement, or if the OPM had at that time brought as much pressure on the company as it did on the union. The agreement on which work is now resumed is virtually the same as that offered a month ago by the OPM and accepted then by the union. Arbitration of grievances is provided, and some measure of contractual security against disruption is given the union. But the ending of the strike is a victory not for the OPM but for the new National Defense Mediation Board, which has again demonstrated the superiority of conciliation to coercion in labor disputes. The attempt of Knudsen and Knox to "order" the strikers back to work was a failure, as it should have been. They had no power to issue any such order and they certainly had no right to ask the union to give up its strike without at the same time asking the employer to make some comparable concessions. The Mediation Board on the contrary has obtained concessions for and from both sides. The Allis-Chalmers settlement adds another to its growing list of victories, and it demonstrates again that it is no mere strikebreaking agency but a medium through which both sides may draw some benefit from a peaceful settlement of disputes.

Knudsen's attempt to break the Allis-Chalmers strike and the speech he made on the eve of its settlement add to the evidence of his partiality in dealing with labor. "The Conciliation Service of the Labor Department, the OPM, and the union," he told the Veterans of Foreign Wars, "tried for two months to find a way of settling the argument, only to find at last that the original strike vote was fraudulent and that the strike was called without the consent of the members." The truth is that the strike would have been settled on March 1 if the company had accepted the OPM agreement. Knudsen's failure to say anything of the company's notorious recalcitrance gives cause for questioning his good faith. But there is also no ground for saying that "the strike was called without the consent of the members," whatever the truth is in the stories of ballot-box irregularity. Knudsen made no effort to learn the union's side of the story on these charges. The union's story is presented for the first time in our Washington letter this week. Knudsen acted on the basis of what Max Babb, head of Allis-Chalmers, told him. This is not our conception of fair play.

But far more serious than the question of fair play for the workers at Allis-Chalmers is the question of fair play for labor as a whole. The real dangers to defense production lie not in strikes but in shortages of raw materials. The need for more aluminum and magnesium, for example, has become a serious impediment to plane production. On the other hand, we have had but one aviation strike, in which eight working days were lost. These were later made up when the workers at Vultee finished its first contract forty days ahead of time. Charges of communism were freely—and loosely—made in the Vultee strike. But little attention is paid to the far more tangible foreign influences and connections which have hobbled this country in the production of basic defense materials. Every crackpot utterance on labor in Congress achieves headlines, but how many newspaper readers knew of Congressman Rabaut's summary in the House on April 2 of the aluminum and magnesium tie-ups abroad? Rabaut pointed out that the international aluminum cartel in which our Mellon company plays a dominant part loosened its restrictions on Hitler, but kept output limited in this and other countries until in 1940 the Reich was able to produce 50 per cent more aluminum than the United States, despite our superior natural resources. Magnesium was left to a company jointly owned by the Aluminum Company of America and the German chemical trust. "Our own Dow Chemical Company," Congressman Rabaut said, "was the sole licensee in this country and agreed to sell only a small amount to England, while its other exports were to go to the German chemical trust at a lower price than any domestic user could purchase it for in the United States." The result was so to restrict production here that while our American output of magnesium in 1940 was 6,000 tons, Germany's was 25,000 tons. Both aluminum and magnesium are essential to aircraft. Why don't the newspapers, which are searching so hard for subversive international influences in labor, pay a little attention to the more obvious and the more serious obstacles created by the greed and the unpatriotic internationalism of big business?

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# *River Rouge Revolt*

BY JAMES A. WECHSLER

*Detroit, April 7*

AT fifteen minutes after midnight, Norman Smith, a hulking, unkempt, gentle-faced organizer who looks like Heywood Broun, stood on top of a C. I. O. sound-truck outside the main gate of the River Rouge plant. The hundreds of workers who had been milling around in the street, shouting and murmuring in the night, became pretty quiet. Then Smith roared: "The strike is on. Picket lines will be formed immediately."

The announcement sounded neat and unrhetorical, but the date—April 2—will be recorded in labor history. There was a lot of the incidental music of history in the setting. Over Smith's head, as he recited the strike call, was the overpass where C. I. O. organizers were so pitilessly slugged by Ford service men in the futile campaign of 1937. Smith himself took a terrific beating from Ford goons in Memphis, where another Ford plant was defying the C. I. O. But now, in the capital of the Ford empire, men had struck for the first time in the thirty-eight-year life of the Rouge plant.

It all happened with such incredible suddenness, and events moved so fast afterward, that the epic touch was almost overlooked. The words and sounds and signs were familiar strike routine. Yet this walkout, C. I. O. chiefs admitted, was close to a trade-union miracle. The basic and indisputable fact was that it was provoked by the company; that the C. I. O. strategists had not planned to strike for several weeks and had hoped that a walkout might be entirely avoided. Several months ago Michael F. Widman, Jr., leader of the C. I. O. drive at Ford, told me: "We won't let Harry Bennett pick the date for a strike if we have to have one." But Harry Bennett did.

The jaunty, shrewd chief of Ford's terror squad could easily have prevented the dismissal of eleven key C. I. O. workers from exploding into a strike. All that the C. I. O. asked was to discuss the firings. Bennett plainly believed that this was the time to fight it out, perhaps because the national temper was so inauspicious for labor, perhaps because he thought the C. I. O. had gained so much ground at River Rouge that it had to be smashed now or not at all. He did not know that he was already too late. Neither did the C. I. O. leaders.

Throughout Tuesday evening the C. I. O. cabinet sat behind closed doors weighing a decision they had hoped to make under less feverish circumstances. As they met, stoppages—genuinely spontaneous—spread through the plant. When Ford officials refused to meet with the cabinet, retreat became impossible; it might have fatally demoralized the whole union. So at 12:15 the word sped into the cold Michigan night that Henry Ford's workers were going on strike.

After that the chips were down in this costly, desperate, long-frustrated campaign to organize the last home of anti-unionism in the auto industry, to make Henry Ford do what he had vowed he never would: recognize an outside union. What happened subsequently exceeded even the wishful thinking usually found in labor upsurges. It was a kind of mass rebellion against a tyranny that people had thought was immortal. Apparently the great bulk of the 85,000 workers employed at Rouge had decided, too, that this might be the last time they could fight it out with hope of success.

Once upon a time Henry Ford had insisted he would never close his plant in the face of a strike crisis; "We would stand to the last man." But twenty-four hours after the walkout Ford officialdom closed the plant, announcing it would not reopen while the war was being waged over mediation tables. The announcement was a confession that the C. I. O. had organized Ford. Thousands of workers signed union cards in the ensuing hours. The A. F. of L., in a frail and foolish effort to steal the C. I. O. show, called a mass meeting and preached back-to-work slogans; but less than 1,000 workers attended the meeting in the hall in which the C. I. O. had rallied 15,000 the night before.

This is written five days after the strike began, and its future is unpredictable. It is obvious here that the paunchy Ford hierarchy is choosing between capitulation in one form or another and a ruthless attempt to break the strike with thugs, brickbats, and guns. If the second course is chosen, there will be murder; because these lines won't yield to fear. Watching Ford workers parade through Dearborn, singing "Solidarity Forever," you are convinced this walkout cannot be broken so long as some measure of law survives. And C. I. O. leaders are confident that the government won't wield clubs for Ford.

There are those who believe that strikes are sinister in time of defense, that they aid the Axis, that they ought to be postponed until Hitler is licked. You get the feeling here that almost the reverse is true: that the strike at Ford is an affirmation of democratic vitality, that so long as 85,000 men were imprisoned behind Ford's feudal gates our democratic talk could be caricatured in the defeatist press. Now Ford's workers, harassed by industry's worst spy system, lacking seniority rights, paid less than men in other great auto plants, no longer walk and talk alone; they have joyous mass-picket lines where distribution of leaflets was once forbidden.

By the time this report appears, the strike may have been settled by a sudden compromise, or pending the Labor Board election, Henry Ford may have unleashed last-ditch violence against his employees. Whatever he does, there is a widespread conviction here that he has lost, and only the procedure of defeat is unsettled. Because while Ford publicists are lamely saying that "imported agitators" are behind the strike, they admitted the lie when they closed the plant.

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# Roosevelt's Answer to Hysteria

BY I. F. STONE

*Washington, April 6*

THIS has been quite a week-end. On Thursday night horrendous rumors were in circulation. The President was going to "speak out at last" on labor. He was preparing to blast John L. Lewis, presumably for telling off Hatton W. Sumners, the well-known electrocutionist. He was about to let loose a terrific attack on the Communists. The anti-labor bloc in Congress felt that *Der Tag* was just around the corner. As one conservative paper said, the strategy was to "build a fire under the President . . . Make him accept legislation curbing strikes which can't pass without his okay." There was an unusually large turnout for the President's press conference Friday morning, and an air of joyful anticipation. The time was fixed for 10:30 but we were kept waiting almost fifteen minutes. When the doors opened, the press burst in like Menelaus on Helen in Rupert Brooke's sonnet—to find the President all serene. His thoughts seemed far from labor troubles. He spoke of new lease-lend allocations, going with some detail into the figures. He discussed merchant shipping and the repair problem. A reporter finally perked up with a question about those strikes. Strikes? There was only one serious stoppage on defense, Mr. Roosevelt said, and that was at Allis-Chalmers. He was giving the Mediation Board a few more days to settle it. That didn't mean eight or ten weeks. The coal strike? He thought it would be settled by Monday. Communists? Yes, there were some in unions as elsewhere, but that didn't apply to labor as a whole. Ford? It is a little difficult to describe Mr. Roosevelt's answer and attitude. It might have been mistaken for a mild interest. It wasn't ungentlemanly enough to be described as a snub. The President was magnificent.

Mr. Roosevelt's calm refusal to be swept away by the strike hysteria was enough to make the week memorable, but there was another pleasant surprise Saturday morning at the Labor Board hearing on the petition for an election at the Ford plant in Dearborn. Ford's counsel, A. I. Capizzi, who sounds more like a Coughlin understudy than a lawyer, was winding up for a speech on the Red menace in the U. A. W.-C. I. O. and the Detroit office of the Labor Board when Dr. William M. Leiserson applied a pin to the bladder. He suggested that the issue being raised was as irrelevant as if the board were to try the charge that Ford was a Nazi agent because he had received a decoration from Hitler. Capizzi recovered sufficiently to suggest that before the war all the crowned heads of Europe had exchanged decorations with one another. Later, when Capizzi returned to the forbidden topic, Dr. Leiserson asked if he thought it would be fair to inquire whether Capizzi was a Communist or a Fascist. "I am an American citizen," Capizzi said, in his most orotund tones. "So are they," was Dr. Leiserson's dry rejoinder. But Capizzi, irrepressible, was soon back at the same subject by another route. Deferentially, he explained that in criticizing the personnel of the Detroit office he, of course, could intend no reflection on the "present majority" of the board, since it was but newly appointed and therefore had nothing to do with picking the communistic personnel in control at Detroit. "I myself appointed Frank Bowen director in Detroit in 1934," interjected Chairman Millis. After Capizzi was finished, there wasn't much that quiet Maurice Sugar had left to do for the U. A. W.-C. I. O.

This afternoon I went up to the OPM, where the mediation panel was in session on the Allis-Chalmers strike, which may be settled by morning. I had heard that the leaders of the Allis-Chalmers union were in town and I hoped to get their version of the ballot-box irregularities which occurred in the strike vote taken under Wisconsin law. I had been told that the local union leaders there were pretty green, but this turned out to be an understatement. The two I first encountered literally fled down the hall when the lone OPM press agent on Sunday duty said I was a newspaperman. Finally one of them went into the conference room and brought out Harold Christoffel, head of the union. Christoffel, a thin, gangling young man, who doesn't seem too experienced, told his story. He said there were two strike votes. The first, on February 19, was held under the union constitution, which requires a two-thirds vote of those present at a strike meeting to authorize a strike. This vote, he explained, was by ballot, not by acclamation. There were about 3,000 workers present and he said the vote was more than 90 per cent for a strike. Under the new Wisconsin law fathered by the reactionary Heil administration, a majority of those in the plant or department is required to make a strike legal. Since there are more than 7,000 men in the plant, the vote at the union strike meeting was not enough. An election under the state law was held on February 21, with some 6,700 votes cast, of which only 758 were against a strike. Imp and Bohachef, the two non-union "disrupters" mentioned last week in *The Nation's* editorial, Knudsen's

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Coup d'Etat, charged that the union had resorted to an unfair labor practice under the state law by changing the form of the question on the ballot between the two elections. A similar charge was filed by the company. In refutation, the union submitted as evidence all the votes cast in both elections.

Christoffel said that the state law requires neither state inspectors at the election nor the preservation of the ballots cast, but that the union had saved the ballots "just in case any question was raised." The union, he said, consulted counsel before the election and arranged to have its returns notarized. It was so anxious to make the election unassailable that it invited non-union as well as union men to vote in the election. The union thought it a joke when the company brought two handwriting experts into the case to examine the ballot-box markings, Christoffel explained, but became worried when the company asked for a week's recess in the Wisconsin Labor Board hearings to allow for further study of the returns. "We thought we'd better get an expert of our own," he said, "so we went to Northwestern University, which has a Crime School and hired a woman who is an expert on ballot frauds. She didn't look twenty minutes before she told us something was wrong, and after a few hours she reported that between 1,800 and 2,200 ballots seemed to contain irregularities." Christoffel denied that any officers of the union had anything to do with these irregularities. He said that people were streaming through the union office all day during the election and that the ballots were small enough for one man to take thirty or forty into the voting booth with him. He blamed the failure to arrive at a settlement on the company's lawyer and deplored the fact that the general works manager, with whom the union was able to get along, had been removed from control. He said the union was not insisting on a closed shop or a union shop but wanted security against the kind of anti-union activities carried on by the company in the past. Christoffel added that he was not a Communist. "I'm not taking orders from anybody," he said, "but the C. I. O."

# *Strategy in the Caribbean*

BY W. ADOLPHE ROBERTS

THE Caribbean policy of the United States has assumed a form which we may reasonably expect to be permanent. It has been developing for 120 years, or since the acquisition of Florida rounded out control of the Gulf Coast. President Monroe had the ingenious theory that the Straits of Florida, between Key West and Cuba, constituted the true mouth of the Mississippi River, and that, as the inevitable corollary of this, all the approaches must be dominated. Other theories had their day, perhaps the most extraordinary being Secretary Seward's that Cuba was formed of sand washed to sea by the Mississippi and therefore belonged to this country.

The safeguarding of trade with the lands bordering the Sea was the next phase of the policy. Then came "Manifest Destiny"—expansion for the sake of expansion—which petered out with William Walker, the filibuster, in Nicaragua. Meanwhile, the real and lasting issue had emerged. Interoceanic canals at the Panama and Nicaragua depressions had become practicable, and already there were overland transit routes at both points. The Caribbean as the maritime lobby of the Pacific grew vastly important to the United States.

After the Spanish-American War and the digging of the Panama Canal, the naval station at Guantánamo, Cuba, and the ownership of Puerto Rico seemed sufficient in a world that did not expect a major war or foresee the rise of air power. The Virgin Islands were bought in 1917 lest Germany should want them. But the victory of the Allies and the supposedly invulnerable military position of friendly Britain and France lulled Washington's anxiety over the Caribbean. The 1920's and most of the 1930's were a dazed period in which confused cries came from the somnambulists in Geneva, and statesmen believed that unarmed neutrality, admonitions, and appeasement would maintain the status quo.

The approach of the present conflict stimulated the Roosevelt Administration into improving existing defenses and formulating new plans for the protection of the Canal. Bases in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands were, with the approval of Congress, ordered developed to a high degree of efficiency. In the spring of 1939 the combined Atlantic and Pacific fleets held maneuvers which clearly indicated that should war occur the United States would not count on the effectiveness of parallel defensive action by the European nations holding colonies in the region. It would pursue its own Caribbean strategy. The Sea was clearly Mare Nostrum.

Recent events are too familiar to call for rehearsal in detail. But certain points need emphasis. The first conference of the American foreign ministers at Panama made a great deal of noise but was important only because it proved that the twenty-one republics were disposed to work together. Meeting a few weeks after the

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outbreak of hostilities in Europe, the diplomats sought to fix a safety zone extending roughly 300 miles from the shores of the Western Hemisphere, excluding Canada. Belligerents who committed an act of war within this zone were threatened with—exactly what? The guns of Hitler's Graf von Spee and the British squadron off the Rio de la Plata went unanswered. Secret agencies had been at work, nevertheless, and in the first week of March, 1940, President Roosevelt remarked that the existing fortifications in the Canal Zone should be, and could be, supplemented by nearby bases. He hinted that while no acquisitions of territory were contemplated, an understanding had been reached with Colombia and Costa Rica for the military use of their airports in an emergency.

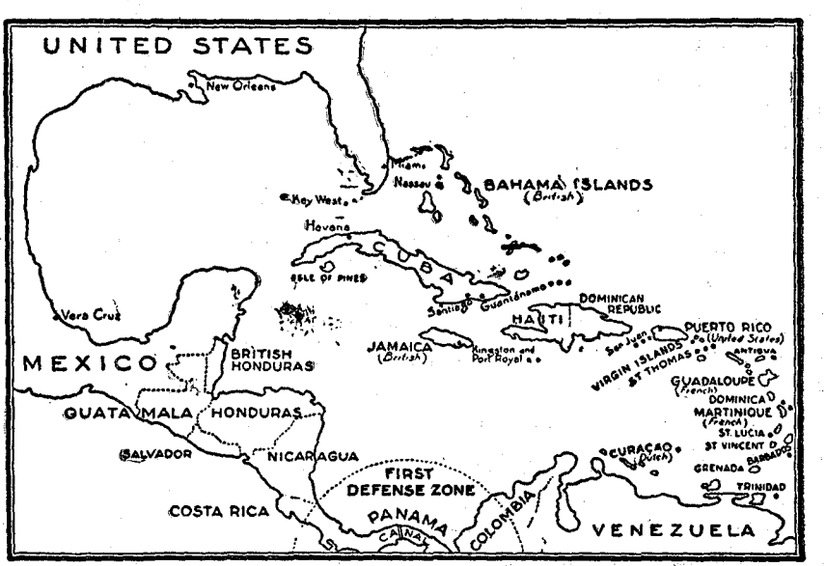
Here, then, was the vital turning point. The United States had concluded that it needed to operate from sites under foreign flags, but it proposed to obtain the facilities by negotiation, working on the assumption that it was the only nation with power vast enough to guard the interests of all the peoples of the Caribbean. It did not take an augur to realize that airports in the immediate vicinity of the Canal would be only a small part of Caribbean defense. Bases had to be sought—in British and French colonies. It was equally certain that all the centrally located republics would yield whatever was asked of them, primarily because the Good Neighbor program of the previous few years had cleared the way. Under any other recent Administration in Washington the little states could have been brought into line only by coercion. But Franklin Roosevelt had done away with the kind of tutelage exemplified by the Platt Amendment in Cuba and the marines in Haiti, closing his eyes at the same time to pocket dictatorships that spelled stability. Business relations, too, were good.

The rapidity with which events moved in 1940 played into the hands of the architects of the new hegemony. The United States, consulted in advance, raised no objections to the British and French marines landing on the Dutch islands of Curaçao and Aruba when Holland was invaded. Sabotage of oil refineries and stores supposedly had to be forestalled. Scarcely six weeks later, France had signed an armistice with Germany, and British warships unofficially blockaded Martinique, where two French cruisers and two destroyers were stationed, and where the aircraft carrier Béarn had just arrived with a hundred planes bought in the United States. Again, though for the moment, aggressive moves by one European power against another were allowed to go unchecked by the true rulers of the Caribbean.

The second conference of the American foreign ministers, at Havana, was a far more weighty and realistic gathering than the one at Panama. From its deliberations emerged the Act of Havana, which provided for a joint guardianship of all European colonies in America that had lost their sovereignty as a result of the war. One or more of the republics might initiate an occupation, a course which it was plainly the intent of the United States to follow freely if Britain collapsed—an event which seemed imminent as the conference ended.

But Britain did not collapse, and there took place instead the bases-for-destroyers deal. The six points of vantage acquired gave the United States a far-flung grip on the region. Close to the Venezuelan coast, Trinidad commands the southerly gateway to the Caribbean and would be the outer bastion in the event of an attempted invasion from Africa by way of Brazil. St. Lucia, more than 200 miles north of the arc of the Lesser Antilles, lies close to the passage from the Atlantic most favored by the ancient navigators, athwart which is Martinique. Antigua is on the edge of the Anegada Passage and looks across to the Virgins. The Bahaman base yet to be selected is an outpost for the Florida stations. Jamaica is of dual importance, being the sentinel of the lower end of the Windward Passage and the island closest to the Isthmus of Panama, 550 miles distant. Here the major defenses of the inner ring are being built. They comprise an airfield, as well as forts to protect the anchorage at Galleon Harbor, which is to be wholly American; and a reconstruction of the base at Port Royal, ancient capital of the buccaneers.

The day Britain consented to the leases it ceased to have a Caribbean program in the military sense. Any future effort on its part would be a duplication of the American effort and thus a futile expense. France and the Netherlands had not been active in the Sea for more than a century, and were now beaten nations with a




*Courtesy of Bobbs-Merrill Company ("The Caribbean" by W. Adolphe Roberts)*

*The Caribbean Sea*

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doubtful, perhaps hopeless, future. None of the Latin republics possessed martial establishments that could figure in rivalry.

Two questions remain to be answered: (1) Has the United States obtained all the footholds it needs to perfect its control of the Caribbean? (2) Is its status as tenant in the British colonies workable, or will it want to annex territory?

I feel strongly that the reply to the first question is no. To complete the strategic pattern it will be necessary to have bases on Martinique, on Dutch Curaçao off the Venezuelan coast, and on the British islands of Barbados. The Yucatan channel leading into the Gulf of Mexico should be watched from a post near Cape San Antonio, the western tip of Cuba. The fairly long gap between Guantánamo and San Juan, Puerto Rico, should be plugged by an air squadron base in either Haiti or the Dominican Republic. It should be understood that I am not advocating all this, but am cold-bloodedly analyzing the drift of a policy. A government cannot plunge into militarism and be satisfied with half measures.

Martinique and Curaçao are indispensable. The French island is the very key to the Lesser Antilles. It has a much better harbor than Gros Islet Bay, St. Lucia, accepted from England because of its proximity to the Martinique channel. Curaçao lies midway off the Spanish Main, between Trinidad and Panama; it also forms the third point of an interior triangle, the other points being Jamaica and the Canal. That would be reason enough for fortifying Curaçao. It is, in addition, the ideal watchtower for the immense oil fields around Maracaibo Lagoon, and its dependency, Aruba, is covered with refineries. The Shell combine and other Dutch interests never cared to take a chance with Venezuelan revolutions, but exported crude oil to Aruba for processing and storing.

The interest of the United States in Martinique was shown as early as November, 1940, when a neutrality patrol from the Atlantic fleet took over from the blockading British squadron. The surveillance is still being maintained, though the French warships have been partially dismantled and the airplanes are said to be rusting in an open field beneath tarpaulins. One may assume that if for any reason troops are landed they will be American marines.

Neither the French nor the Dutch government could lease bases to the United States without incurring reprisals from the Germans in occupied territory. But we are likely to see the Stars and Stripes go up in Martinique and Curaçao before the war ends. It will be justified, somehow, as an emergency act. If this country goes to war with Germany, the matter would be simple indeed.

The argument for a base on Barbados lies in the isolation of that island, a hundred miles or so east of the rest of the Lesser Antilles. It is an advance post which might be seized by an enemy if a tightly drawn battle were raging. It is not essential to a defensive plan, but it would seem the part of wisdom to modernize the feeble armaments which the British now have there. The airfields suggested for western Cuba and Hispaniola are also secondary. If required, the governments concerned would probably yield them willingly.

Whether the United States should, or will, seek outright possession of the colonies where it has bases is a tangled question which cannot be answered with a flat yes or no. Imperialists favor a clean sweep while the getting is good, in partial liquidation of war debts old and new, and to enhance the national prestige. There are many arguments against this extreme position. President Roosevelt has personally disclaimed it. The Havana Conference came out for self-determination for the colonies. The dominant political groups in the United States, particularly the Southern reactionaries, are determined that no large addition to the Negro population shall be made. Although the colonies would not be granted statehood, they would have spokesmen in Congress and their new status would enable Negroes to come to work in this country without having to hurdle the barriers that now stand in their way. Nor is American business eager to lower tariff bars on a new stream of tropical products in competition with those of Puerto Rico and Hawaii. Finally, it is realized that it would harm rather than help the national prestige to gain territory at the cost of offending fellow members of the Pan-American Union and arousing the enmity of the autonomist factions in the more developed British colonies.

But military exigencies will carry weight, and I believe that a compromise is indicated. Islands so small that the naval and air bases occupy a considerable proportion of their area are likely to be acquired *in toto*. St. Lucia and Antigua, for instance, are only a little over one hundred square miles each. The problems of local government will become complicated in such places as the American personnel increases and new sites have to be taken over. It has been officially announced that the Gros Islet foothold in St. Lucia is but a beginning, and other sections of the island are being surveyed for airfields. The Bahaman coral key to be utilized is pretty certain to be one of those inhabited only by fishermen and sponge-divers; a double administration would be cumbersome.

The bases in Jamaica, Trinidad, and British Guiana, on the other hand, can be operated as pocket domains with no more difficulty than has marked the operation of the one at Guantánamo, Cuba, for forty years. Spheres of special interest can be definitely established in a large community, which has other problems to think about. In view of this, and for the reasons cited above, I do not think that the annexation of any important British or French colony is contemplated.

What is the attitude of the other American republics toward the mastery of the Caribbean by the United

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States? Present conditions are unique. The fear of a totalitarian victory in Europe and Asia hangs over the Western Hemisphere, and the spirit of Pan-American cooperation is correspondingly strong. But how will it be when the war is over? Though the position now being solidified will not be abandoned, its usefulness might be hampered by disgruntled neighbors.

The extent of economic aid given by the United States during the war will decide the matter in part. European markets have been lost by all the Caribbean countries, and some of the results have been disastrous. Poverty-stricken Haiti is largely dependent on its coffee crop, the bulk of which went to France, but which no longer has purchasers there. Venezuela, Colombia, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic also depend heavily on coffee, much of which was taken by France, Germany and Italy. Sales of cocoa, copra, sugar, and rum have been seriously affected. So has Venezuelan oil. Only bananas and chicle have held up, since the United States has been the chief market for these products.

Loans from the Treasury and from the Export-Import Bank have helped. For instance, $11,300,000 has been advanced to the Cuban Sugar Stabilization Institute, $2,000,000 to the government of Nicaragua, and proportionate sums to other republics. There has been an increased absorption of tropical products, notably of Haitian coffee, though not as yet in amounts sufficiently large to restore shattered economies. A more determined effort will have to be made in this direction. It is equally important to provide Central America with manufactured goods which only the United States can furnish in time of war.

The soundness of democracy below Key West and the Rio Grande is something else again. The defeat of Germany would, of course, render the idea of totalitarianism extremely unpopular throughout the Western Hemisphere. Contrariwise, Vice-President Wallace made the following statement in a recent speech in Chicago: "If England loses, the Nazi scheme of things will, unless proper safeguards are taken, come into control within less than a year in certain Latin-American republics." I do not know precisely what countries Mr. Wallace had in mind, but I feel sure that his assertion is too sweeping to apply to the Caribbean region. If our policy there continues along its present lines and economic aid is forthcoming, approval of the role of the United States should withstand the worst jolts the war can bring.

# *Will Turkey Fight?*

BY PETER STEVENS

*Istanbul, March 14*

MUSTAFA KEMAL PASHA, the Ghazi (Conqueror) has been dead for two and a half years. His portraits, like shrines, still hang in every house, every schoolroom, every office, every restaurant, night club, and hotel. It is not unusual for adult men to weep when they mention his name or glance reverently at the steel-blue eyes looking down from hundreds of thousands of gilded frames throughout Turkey. The Ghazi dreamed of a democratic republic for his people, but lack of education and appreciation of such a Western idea made the hope illusory. He even went to the length of asking a friend to form a "loyal" opposition, but the plan had to be abandoned because the lives of the synthetic opposition were constantly in danger from Turks who could not understand the idea and thought of the new party as dangerous revolutionists. Thus the People's Party, the party of Ataturk, as he called himself, is the only political organization in Turkey and its nomination is equal to election to the national legislature, which does meet from time to time in Ankara to ratify what the executive department has already decided to do.

Today Turkey is ruled by Ataturk's political and military satellites. At their head is Ismet Inonu, who took his last name from a military victory he won against the Greeks. He is a competent and quiet little military careerman, a professional soldier who gave up his sword to follow Ataturk into the field of politics. Saydam, the Prime Minister, and Saracoglu, the Foreign Minister, were likewise close followers of the Ghazi. This is at best a government of disciples, and the spirit of the dead Ataturk as well as his portrait hovers over their nervous meetings, for no one dare do anything of importance in Turkey without debating what the Ghazi would have done under such-and-such circumstances. His every word is poured over. "HE would do it if HE were alive," is the highest recommendation for an action.

Fundamentally this is the most "un-Ghazilike" approach to a problem. Ataturk was extremely impetuous; he made bold and unexpected decisions of greatest importance on a moment's whim; surprise and violence were his best tools; and he detested caution and deliberation. It is hard to believe that he would have had the patience to carry on the long and deliberate diplomatic game of gradual retreat in which Turkey has engaged in this war; he would have attacked the first minute that

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a German stepped on Bulgarian soil. It was he who threatened a war against victorious England and France when he had but an unarmed rabble with which to fight. The flare, the élan, the dash of his policy, which carried Turkey that far, are now missing and in their place is the prudence of a group of aging men who debate each point.

Each week or two new statements of policy come from Ankara. They are cleverly and very orientally phrased and purport to say what Turkey will or will not do to meet the German flood spreading over Europe. Always the door is left open for a later interpretation which will allow Turkey to do nothing. They always boil down to "We will fight if our territory is invaded, possibly if we think we are threatened, certainly not now."

*Sukru Saracoglu* — *Dolbin*

Six months ago it was impossible to find a Turk who did not believe that a German penetration of the Southern Balkans would be the signal for Turkey to attack. But that was last fall, which, in this uncertain atmosphere, now seems years ago. Almost all Turks believed that "one single German uniform in Bulgaria means we will advance to the line of the mountains south of Sofia." It was considered extremely unpatriotic to question this and one American who did was asked to leave the country. Now the Germans have come, not only to Bulgaria, but in great numbers to positions where the Turkish frontier sentries can easily see them with the naked eye. And when they came, no one in Turkey was surprised that war did not result.

Little by little, the government-dictated press (the only press in Turkey) prepared the people. There was no one day on which you could say, "Have you seen the newspapers today? The government has changed its policy; we shall not fight over Bulgaria." It was a beautifully executed retreat—but retreat it most certainly was. The Germans came and stayed, and the people of Istanbul, with the potential enemy less than 200 kilometers away, went most unexcitedly about their tasks, so gently and so completely had their minds been changed for them.

The new idea of the English alliance is that England is bound to come to Turkey's aid when it is attacked but that Turkey is not bound to come to the aid of England or its Greek ally under any circumstances. Possibly, as rumored here, this is the advice of the British who are not yet ready to give the Turks that aid, especially in equipment, which can prevent the loss and dispersal of the Turkish army. It is argued that Eden and Churchill do not want to waste 1,000,000 stout-hearted fighting men on a hopeless task when later, well equipped, they may be the backbone of the army that will invade Germany.

The Turks, however, lived for many generations as the professional fighting class of the vast Ottoman Empire and they are proud and touchy about their ability to fight anyone, anywhere, anytime. Besides, the Ghazi often told his people that they must always attack first. They do not readily take to these Western ways of weighing all the possibilities. Their Ghazi flattered them often with the name "Invincibles." Thus the military class, in a one-party country, where criticism is unpatriotic, is beginning to question the decisions of the ruling politicians in Ankara. These officers remember Ataturk too well to allow the men in Ankara to interpret his words for them. Did he not say Turkey was doomed if it sat by and saw a great power move into the Balkans? These questionings are still discreet, but there are distinct rumblings of disappointment and even bitterness.

How will the Turks stand up under this war, which, deep down, they all feel is inevitable? They will have a great advantage over any enemy, however strong it is on paper, for they are deeply, religiously convinced that they are invincible on their own soil. The average man in this country believes that no Turk can be stampeded or demoralized by modern war machinery: he holds the dive-bomber in contempt except as a weapon against women and children; he feels that an infantry willing to sacrifice its lives as individuals is more than a match for tanks; he is convinced that he can make less ammunition go further, use a bayonet better, march farther with no food and little water, sustain the will to win longer than any other fighting man in the world. This is an important dogma of the religion of the Great Ghazi. There is the story current here that a general, Nuri Pasha, recently marched his men eighty-two hours with no food and only one canteen of water each; no stops were allowed night or day.

It is notable that no one well informed has any fears of fifth-column activity in Turkey. The well-worn Nazi formula used so successfully with slight variations in Norway, Holland, France, Belgium, Rumania, and Bulgaria simply cannot be used at all in Turkey. There are literally no Turks who would fall for it; the religion of the Ghazi is too strong and united for there to be a schism. As for Germans here, the Turkish police know them all and literally shadow each and every non-English or non-American foreigner. In number the German agents are extremely few, and if the Greek boast that they had every Italian six hours after war began is justified, then Turkey would better that record by at least six

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hours. Fortunately, no foreigner can speak Turkish without a noticeable accent.

The Turks do not fear the destruction of Istanbul; they know it will occur, and aside from a certain nationalistic pride in the great mosques built by their early leaders, they are oddly indifferent. The historical and artistic values of old Constantinople are those of the West, of Greece, and its European successor civilization. As for Pera and Galata, the Greeks, Armenians, Jews, and Europeans live there, and the Turk thinks that it will, in the long run, be a blessing if its wooden hovels and crooked streets are destroyed so that a modern city may rise in its stead. The Turk is a great lover of the Modern, the New.

To us it would be tragic to lose Sancta Sofia, the great Church of Justinian with its tradition and beauty, in many ways the cradle of our civilization. But apart from this single great building, there is little to lose save sentiment. Even if England cannot afford to supply enough mechanized equipment and air strength in time to save the situation, and, if as a result, Turkey is defeated in Europe, that will not be the end. European Turkey is a small part of Turkey, and woe to him who pours his men and machines into the waterless stretches and trackless mountains of Anatolia. Here the Turk is supreme and the invader will have to fight every man, woman, and child of the civilian population, as well as a trained army of over 1,000,000 men. When the Greeks, with the backing of England, tried it in the early 1920's, they were cut to ribbons by a mob of peasants hurriedly assembled by Mustafa Kemal in a Turkey disunited and torn by civil war, a Turkey that had been crushingly defeated by the Allies only a year or two before. Frantically aroused by the presence of an invader on the sacred soil of Anatolia, the women of the peasantry cut the throats of Greek soldiers with long knives while they slept; children stoned them to death. The Greek army was soon a crazily retreating remnant. Many died of thirst on the trek back to the sea. Few returned to Greece.

It is dangerous to tackle any nation when it is in the throes of a great national renaissance, when any war of defense becomes a Holy War. At no time has the Turk been a pushover for any army. Now he is doubly dangerous, defending the Most Sacred Trust of the Ghazi, the Turkey he willed to each Turk to protect. It may well be that with its strength spread rather thinly from Arctic Norway to subtropical Sicily, from France in the west to Poland and Rumania in the east, Germany will find in Turkey the straw that will break the camel's back. Every Turk knows that when the first shot is fired the dead Ghazi will arise from his tomb in the Ethnological Museum in Ankara and lead his people in a new Holy War. They have seen what a small nation like Greece can do when inspired, and a Turkish counterpart of that campaign would surprise no foreign resident of the Balkans. The New Turkey of Ataturk is ready for the acid test, confidently, quietly, and a little impatiently.

# *Minorities On the Move*

BY ANTHONY FIELD

IN THE past eight years Hitler has shifted millions of people—civilians—back and forth across the face of Europe. Quite apart from the movement of troops, war prisoners, and refugees blasted from their homes by bombs, he has set in motion human migrations on a scale vast enough to recall the time when hordes from the south and east first settled the European continent. Germans who had been living and working in other countries have been repatriated by the thousands, while Germans distasteful to the Hitler regime have been expatriated, when they have not been executed. Great numbers of Jews have fled Germany and countries overrun by the Nazis. And, finally, the Germans are constantly shifting workers from their homes in the occupied countries to the places in which they can best serve the Axis war machine.

Although the Nazis make little effort to hide the fact that they are uprooting millions of people and disrupting whole social systems, it is impossible to get a precise estimate of all the numbers concerned. By checking the data of the best American news agencies against that of the International Labor Office, the various governments in exile, and the German government, it is possible to get a reasonably clear picture of what is going on. For instance, it is known that after the Soviet-Nazi *rapprochement* in the autumn of 1939, some 50,000 people were shifted from the Baltic states—Latvia, Lithuania, and Esthonia—to Germany. The same winter, after the partition of Poland, some 130,000 Germans from Russia or Russian-occupied Poland moved to Germany. At about the same time some 50,000 Germans from Southern Tyrol were shifted back to Germany according to the terms of a treaty between Italy and Germany. In the latter half of 1940, when the Russians moved into Bessarabia, about 100,000 Germans went back to their fatherland. And in January of this year another 51,000 Germans from the Baltic countries were repatriated and some 100,000 Poles were shifted from German into Russian territory.

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It was reported that the Russians, on their part, re-transferred to Siberia a half-million Poles who had entered Soviet territory after the German occupation, and that from 30,000 to 40,000 White Russians and Ukrainians were moved into Poland. About 70,000 Frenchmen whom Hitler felt were dangerous to his control of Lorraine, were moved to unoccupied France, according to reports from that province. It is known, however, that most of them actually went to Algeria.

The number of Jews moved around inside Greater Germany is unknown, but those forced to leave Germany and the occupied countries total about 600,000. After the fall of Poland the Nazis announced that all the Jews of Greater Germany were to be sent to the "Lublin Jewish Reservation." But no more than 40,000 Jews from the Reich have gone there until quite recently, when a new deportation wave set in. Most of the Polish Jews who lived outside the big cities are simply being sent into the overcrowded ghettoes of Warsaw and Cracow.

The German "master race" itself is by no means safe from Hitler's migromania. In January, 1940, the Germans announced that 400,000 families—mostly farmers and tradesmen from Baden and Württemburg—would be transferred to Poland. That would mean, if the proportion of peasants, with their large families, ran high, as it undoubtedly did, that nearly 2,000,000 people were to be uprooted from their homes. In addition to these, 350,000 of the Germans who had been recalled from other countries were settled in Western Poland, an area which the Nazis hope will become predominantly German within a few years.

Some of the reasons for these tremendous population shifts are obvious, others obscure. The treatment of the Jew is part of the Nazi religion. The expulsion of patriotic Frenchmen from Lorraine was an essential part of the Germanization of the area. Other groups have been moved in an effort to break up economic or political resistance to the conquerors. In Poland, for example, people have been shifted around within relatively small areas for no purpose other than that of disrupting community life and solidarity and aggravating sectional prejudices. But perhaps the two most interesting aspects of the population changes instigated by the Reich are those involving forced labor and the mystical repatriation of Germans who had been living, some of them for generations, in other countries.

To some extent the transfer of Polish labor to Germany was only the continuation and acceleration of an old trend. Ever since Germany became an industrial nation there has been a steady flow of Polish workers into German factories and into the coal mines of the Rhineland. Even when Germany was primarily agrarian Polish farm laborers worked in the Reich. A treaty between the two countries fixed the exact number of workers that could be moved in a year, their wages, and the period for which they would stay in Germany. That process has been incredibly speeded up until, today, whole labor contingents in factories and farm areas are made up of Poles bossed by German overseers while the former German workers do battle against the British, the Greeks, and the Yugoslavs.

The Czech, Dutch, Belgian, and French workers now feeding the German war machine ease Germany's burden politically as well as industrially. To a large extent they have been taken from the most radical sections of their homelands. *"La ceinture rouge de Paris"*—that is, the "Red girdle of Paris"—is today said to be largely depleted of its most radical workers, as are the Czech socialist communities of Prague, Pilsen, and Kladno. When the Nazis entered Czechoslovakia, France, Belgium, they rounded up the radicals and bluntly informed them that if they did not work for Germany they would receive no compensation when they were unemployed, and that they would be unemployed very soon, since their bosses were to be forced to fire them. They were promised wages equal to those received by the Germans themselves if they complied. Under the circumstances there was little that most of the workers could do but accept. Today they provide Germany with a better labor supply than it would ordinarily have.

The most intricate and in many ways inexplicable problem raised by Hitler's migromania is presented by the "repatriation" of the Germans abroad or, as it is frequently put, their "liberation from foreign yokes." Take the example of the Baltic Germans, those descendants of old Crusaders and Hanseatic traders, for centuries the masters of the country and owners of nearly all the land in large estates; and the Germans of Southern Tyrol, famous wine and fruit growers of Bozen and Meran, settled and deeply rooted in one of the most attractive regions of the earth for something like one thousand years. Both groups were representative of the best in the German tradition.

Technically the Tyrolean and the Baltic moves were made through bilateral treaties concluded between Germany and Italy, Russia, Esthonia, and Latvia. The minorities themselves had no say in the matter. Politically, the Italian case differs from the Baltic. Mussolini was anxious to get rid of the Germans in *Alto Adige* (the Italian expression for Southern Tyrol). The angle south of the Brenner Pass allotted to Italy by the peace of St. Germain is the key to Italy's strategic northern defense line, and for this and historical reasons the Fascists did their utmost to denationalize the Germans there. Thus the repatriation was in truth a kind of liberation from the importunities of a foreign oppressor.

Even if this particular shift was actually a bargain between the two autocrats, Hitler would have never paid such a price to win a partner had not the entire idea fitted

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his secret plans. The history of the agreement is not completely known. Apparently by its original terms all Germans would have had to move north unconditionally. The final arrangement, which was influenced by the stubborn resistance of the mountain peasants, provided an option: as far as we know only a part of the 200,000 preferred to be "liberated." Reportedly they settled in the Northern Tyrol and in Vorarlberg, the westernmost province of Austria, and in Western Poland.

Unlike the Italians, the Baltic peoples made no effort to suppress the Germans culturally. The Baltic peoples were farmers, and the Germans were their lawyers, physicians, merchants, teachers, even in part their civil service staff. Esthonia had passed a most generous law in 1926 on cultural autonomy, permitting the Germans to run (and to raise taxes for) their own schools. If any minority ever enjoyed full-fledged liberty, it was the Baltic Germans. They were not longing for liberation. But it happened that the Baltic Germans had remarkable assets. Berlin badly needed foreign currency. From the text of the two treaties it is clear that "liberated" conationals were allowed, besides some furniture and tools, only a little pocket money for exportation (50 lats and 50 Esthonian crowns respectively), whereas the bulk of their fortune (cash, real estate, plant, bonds, notes) had to be handed over to a German Trustee Association (*Treuhandstelle*) which liquidated it and transferred the receipts to Germany. Considering the Reich's enormous needs, however, this haul can hardly account exclusively for such a mass movement. Doubtless the primary motive was Hitler's desire to create a solid block of Germans in the center of Europe in order to forestall possible attempts by foreign nations to assimilate the scattered German minorities, perhaps to deprive these states of the chance eventually to use these Germans as hostages, and finally to increase the military power of the Reich.

If Hitler wins, this migratory process will go on and may even be aggravated. Slav, French, and Jewish minorities will disappear within the Reich. If the Allies win, the foreign workers in Germany will try to return to their old lands. The Lorraine Frenchmen will flock back. Many of the Poles will stay in Germany. A certain number of the Jews will try to go back there; although those of the younger generation who have become part of the countries of their wartime residence will not be eager to return. The Zionist movement will grow.

The Baltic Germans will make every effort to regain their privileged positions if Russia should free the Baltic countries again. Yet even if Russia does free them, would Esthonia, Latvia, or a Baltic or an Oslo Bloc within a future European federation really care to have the Germans back? The ousted mountaineers of Southern Tyrol can by no force on earth be compelled to stay where they are now. And, finally, a new type of refugee, the Nazi refugee, disguised or not, will enter the scene.

# *In the Wind*

REAL ESTATE: On March 23, when income-tax grumbling was at its height, the New York *Times* published, page one, column one, a story telling how residents of the Westchester suburbs were moving to Connecticut, where there are no income taxes. (See Jonathan Daniels in *The Nation* for April 1.) "Throughout Westchester," said the *Times,* "suburbanites are expressing acute awareness of greener pastures over the line." The story so incensed Westchester real estate men and merchants that they demanded reparations. On March 30, page one, column one, the *Times* ran a story headed: "Westchester Finds Spurt in Building of Private Homes." The story began, "The wooded hills of Westchester are echoing to the thud of the carpenter's hammer and the clink of trowel against stone. . . ."

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS who boarded the Italian ships seized last week reported that in the mess rooms and recreation halls the walls were adorned with pictures of Mussolini and Victor Emmanuel. In the crew's bunkrooms they found photographs only of Margie Hart, the strip-tease girl.

GEORGE SOKOLSKY was recently asked his opinion on freedom of the press. To illustrate his belief that most publishers are not influenced by advertisers, Sokolsky told of his own experiences with Bernarr MacFadden's *Liberty.* In the course of some articles Sokolsky found it necessary to mention certain commercial products, and despite the fact that the products never advertised in *Liberty,* he said, the editors allowed him to mention them.

THE NEW YORK Legislature has been requested by several of the state's important figures to investigate Judge Herbert O'Brien of Queens, whose testimony on the Lease-Lend Act before the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee was openly inflammatory. A counter-petition has been drawn up by many of the Christian Front-Coughlinite supporters toward whom O'Brien has long been friendly. Among the signers, according to the New York *Gaelic-American,* is Representative Vito Marcantonio.

EDUCATIONAL AUTHORITIES in Spain recently announced through the press that sixteen important chairs were vacant in the state universities. Not one person applied for any of the jobs.

FRANK CROWNINSHIELD, veteran editor of *Vogue,* had this to say of Nazi spies in Mexico in a recent issue of the magazine: "The best-equipped German spies in Mexico are usually men of a highly intellectual order. The archaeologists probably rank first, both in their number and ability; after them the ornithologists, botanists, mineralogists, conchologists, and ichthyologists, in approximately that order."

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be easily authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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# A Native at Large

BY JONATHAN DANIELS

## "The Greatest of These . . ."

THE multiplicity of British and other war charities has the home folks confused in the home towns, where there is a real and increasing desire to give. Britain's people in their tragedy seem neighbors now. Main Street ladies are ready to strip kitchens of mail-order aluminum pots and pans to provide the parts for British bombers. But in the enthusiastic confusion there is a real possibility that both the home folks and the essential foreign war charities may suffer together.

Sometimes it is hard to tell whether the multiplicity of the good-intentioned or the ubiquitousness of the racketeers does the more harm. I suspect that the racketeers are less dangerous than the men of good will. Also, I know from the small towns that the highly organized good will coming from the great cities under big names often fails to reach hearts. The reason for this is the almost rank growth of local individualism in good deeds which has flourished among people who see no reason why they should not go right ahead where they are, collecting for Britain on their own initiative and according to their own plans.

By now a certain able young business man I know in a small American city must have become a somewhat puzzled national figure. He had plenty of work of his own to do—and little time of his own to spare. But he decided it was his duty to assume the local leadership of one of the largest and best of the organizations seeking gifts for the relief of the people of Britain. He had hardly taken on the job, however, before he discovered that he was not alone. The town seemed full of collectors, each certain of his—or generally her—cause. With great good sense he called a meeting of every type and kind of the friends of the British.

Not all the collectors came. A good many did. There was a preacher who decided he would rather collect funds from school children for British children than work with a national organization of the same kind working in the same way. There was a lady restricting herself to work among the D.A.R. There was a Baptist lady ready to lead her Baptist sisters into any good relief work, and in a hurry to be off. A man who had been collecting pledges of a dollar a head from firemen and policemen, with which to purchase a bomber, was not present. Others were, and enthusiastically, but all with a growing consciousness of confusion. The young business man wanted a central local committee for charity drives for the suffering in England and elsewhere, similar to the community chest for local drives. He may get it. The confusion is incentive to sense.

But beyond the scope of any such local body is the mail, which comes pleading persuasively from far away. Much of its pleading is for excellent causes. In my own mail one morning were the cry that "there must be no blackout of the Bible" and some deeply appealing Save-the-Children facts. Both appeals were from highly reputable organizations which are trying to do excellent work and need money to do it with. There are many more such. My only feeling is that the diverse drives of the diverse good causes may do all of them harm.

Of course, there are the racketeers. The world will never bleed so badly that they will not be with us. In the last great war a board named by Secretary of War Baker reported that out of 3,000 money-raising appeals, involving upwards of a billion dollars, only 300 were worthy. The State Department by its license requirements has already made some effort to reduce the percentage of racketeering in this war. It has been reduced, undoubtedly. A national agency has been set up to help divide the good from the wicked; it has found organizations about which it urges serious inquiry before any contributions are made—and some of them have heart-touching names.

I am not sure there is any certain way to protect the people in the home towns from either foolish organizations or essentially wicked ones. But of one thing I am sure: a great deal of energy—much of it straight from the heart—is reaching from great centers to little towns, to distant states, for gifts. And in those little towns it begins to look as if not only money, but horse-sense, is needed. The small towns, I think, would like to send back to the organizations in the big cities an appeal of their own—that they get the people of good will together, reduce the number of their organizations, budget their businesses, and cut down the costs of duplicating postage and telephone bills.

If the good organizations will get together, we people in the country will have less trouble in spotting the racketeers. Today the confusion of good works is a rank-growing jungle in which racketeers with only a cash interest in our hearts get beyond them to our pocketbooks. Honest directors of war charity must thin this forest, if they hope to get rid of the weeds.

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# BOOKS *and the* ARTS

## CULTURE AND LIBERTY

BY HERBERT READ

THE connection between culture and liberty is not just rhetorical, as the phrase might suggest, but vital and organic. That is the general conclusion I shall try to establish, but before reaching it I want to show, first, what meaning I attach to the word culture; secondly, how culture is related to the kind of society we live in, or intend to live in—and that will involve a definition of liberty; and, thirdly, why culture is incompatible with the kind of society which has been set up by the totalitarian states.

Culture is a slow product of the organic process we call history, and it is very difficult to catch it on the move. For example, contemporary efforts to estimate the greatness of poets and painters are almost invariably wrong. And if occasionally an age does honor the right man, it generally does so for the wrong reason. Now, in our dumb instinctive way I think we as a nation have always realized this, and for that reason we have not tried to define the quality of our culture. There is very little in the body of English writing which shows any consciousness of our native genius as it is expressed in our literature and drama, painting and music. By comparison, the literatures of Germany and of France abound in such self-examinations, self-criticisms, and self-satisfaction.

I am not going to make the mistake of confusing culture with what, in a narrower sense, we call the arts. When you have examined all the architecture and drama, the oratory and philosophy, the poetry, painting, and music of a nation, even then you have not exhausted the meaning of the word. To be worthy of the word, a nation has to possess something more—something in its manners, something in its speech and behavior—something which we might call gentleness, grace, or reverence. And this intangible quality may be precisely the essential quality—the one thing to which, if it is given to a nation, all other things are added. It is precisely this quality which is lacking, and always has been lacking, in the culture of our present enemy.

For German poetry, for German philosophy, for some periods of German architecture, I have the greatest admiration; I feel for German culture a sympathy which is deep and genuine. But at the same time this feeling of sympathy has always been accompanied by a feeling of despair. It is as though every road taken by German poets and philosophers led to the edge of an abyss—an abyss from which they could not withdraw, but must fall into headlong—the abyss which is the second part of "Faust," or the transcendentalism of Kant, or the dialectic of Hegel—abysses of intellect no longer controlled by any awareness of the sensuous realities of life. Now these faults are not unknown to the Germans themselves, and some of their greatest writers, Goethe and Nietzsche, for example, have indulged in orgies of national self-castigation. But let me quote a less well-known self-criticism—the words of a very great poet, perhaps the greatest of all German poets, and one whom the Nazis have sometimes perverted to their nationalistic purposes: Friedrich Hölderlin. This is what he said about his fellow countrymen in a letter to his friend Bellarmin:

> It is a hard word, and yet I say it because it is the truth: I can think of no people more divided and torn than the Germans. You see artisans, but not human beings; thinkers, but not human beings; priests, but not human beings; masters and servants, old and young people, but not human beings. . . . But your Germans like to stick to the most material and necessary tasks, and that is why there is amongst them so much bungling, and so little really free and joyful activity. But even that could be overlooked, if only such men were not so insensitive to all beautiful life, if only the curse of god-forsaken, unnatural life did not rest everywhere on such a people. . . . Everything on earth is so imperfect, the Germans are ever complaining. If only someone would tell this god-forsaken people that things are so imperfect amongst them only because they do not leave purity uncorrupted and sacred things untouched by their coarse hands; that nothing flourishes amongst them because they do not heed the roots of growth, divine nature; that amongst them life is empty and burdensome and too full of cold, mute conflict, because they scorn the spirit, which infuses vigor and nobility into human activity and serenity into suffering, and brings into cities and dwellings love and brotherhood.

That is a long quotation, but it makes an important point: the point that culture is not an affair of crude calculation, or power and purpose, but of the spirit, of *Genius,* as Hölderlin writes in German. And this is the essence which, somehow or other, we have to preserve within the structure of our society.

Now, what has been proved many times in the past, and what is being proved today in Germany, is that this spirit can only exist in an atmosphere of liberty. And by liberty we mean, not economic security which is the

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only conception of liberty entertained by Hitler, but something much more in the nature of intellectual adventure. This becomes clear if we examine what might be called the incidence of culture, for then the vital difference between the true and the false conception of culture is seen to be a difference of position. I mean that you can regard culture either as something originating in separate individuals, or as something deriving from the collective entity of the nation. This is a very important distinction, and Hitler himself is quite aware of it. When three years ago he opened the magnificent new *Haus der Deutschen Kunst* in Munich, he made a speech of an hour and a half entirely devoted to these questions of art and culture. During the course of this speech Hitler made quite clear the very close connection which exists between the political and the artistic concept of National Socialism. According to the Nazi theory, as a nation grows to self-awareness and to power, there comes into being an art which is of that nation, peculiar to that nation, a direct expression of its being and ethos.

Hitler has enforced a national standard of art and has created a whole organization to see that this standard is adopted and observed by all artists, architects, writers, and composers within the Reich. And with the help of the Gestapo, that standard has been the only standard in evidence for the last seven years.

The result is disastrous. We have seen photographs of the new architecture, and of some of the new works of painting and sculpture. We have read some of the new poetry and drama. In so far as it is not crude propaganda, all this work, in every department of art, is of a dulness and deadness not exceeded by our own Royal Academy. It is not merely the expression of empty life, of cold mute conflict: when not barbarous, it is vulgar and sentimental, and never once lifts itself into those regions of radiance and joy and fantasy to which all true works of art belong.

Such is the kind of culture which we may expect in a country that subordinates the artist and writer to political censorship and police control. For the Nazi theory that art is a sort of reward for national self-sufficiency, and that it will blossom when the state of self-sufficiency is securely established, ignores the truth of the matter, which is far more subtle. All forms of art, and indeed all expressions of human genius, are the products of exceptionally endowed individuals, and though those products may to a considerable extent depend on the kind of society to which these individuals belong, their actual creation is the result of a very delicate psychological balance of forces within the individual mind. Nothing can explain the erratic phenomena of art except laws of chance and probability which are beyond calculation. But if we are so ignorant of the positive laws of artistic expression, we do know, on the negative side, that no force is so easily inhibited. It is not merely that the act of expression—the particular inspiration which gives birth to a work of art—is subject to frustration by the least interruption and dispersal of the mood of concentration; but the whole artistic life of the artist can be brought to a sudden end by casual and apparently irrelevant causes—by marriage, by age, by change of climate, or even by change of diet. But devastating as these interruptions are, they are as nothing compared with any form of external control affecting the mode and quality of expression. You may put a poet in prison and he will still write; but if you tell him what to write and how to write, either he will not be able to write another word, or he will produce those monuments of dulness typified by the coronation odes of our poets laureate.

That, surely, is obvious to all but the kind of thug or philistine who rules in Germany, but let us give the thug his due. Hitler does at any rate acknowledge the importance of art, which is more than any British government has ever done. Fatal as his interference with art has been, do not let us entertain the complacent idea that our policy of laissez-faire is the alternative. As in economics, so in art: laissez-faire within a capitalist economy merely abandons art to the chances of unrestricted competition, and the devil take the hindmost. It means that art becomes one more commodity on the free market, and that to succeed it must practice all the wiles of salesmanship —mass appeal, sex appeal, adulteration, and the sacrifice of quality to cheapness. That, in short, is what is wrong with our culture.

The commercialization of art has been accomplished in the past 150 years. Before that time art existed for the most part on patronage, and though I don't like the sound of the word, it is to some form of patronage that art must return if it is ever to recover its vitality. But this brings us up against a very real dilemma. It is impossible—and will become still more impossible in the socialist state of the future—to depend on *personal* patronage. The alternative is obvious, you will say—*state* patronage. But how are we to visualize state patronage; how is such state patronage going to differ essentially from the state control of art exercised by Hitler's regime? I do not see how the cold master of the state can replace the sympathetic patron, how a heterogeneous committee can ever be a substitute for the man of taste and sensibility. Not that all patrons in the past were enlightened: some of them were as prejudiced and tyrannical as a Hitler. The only substitute for patronage I can suggest is some form of guild organization in which the artists, in each branch of the arts, give mutual support to each other and divide whatever income they can procure by exchanging their products for the products of other organized producers. But this implies a form of guild socialism of which I am apparently the sole surviving advocate in this country.

And here let me explain that when I speak of guild

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socialism, or on other occasions of anarchism or syndicalism, I always have in mind this very problem of culture and liberty, which is for me the snag in the way of any system of state socialism. It is not merely that I cannot see how the sensuous and spiritual truths of culture can be safely delivered into the hands of ministries and committees; it is not merely that I distrust the calculating minds of economists and politicians; but everywhere I look, whether into past history or at present practice, I see the hand of the state as a dead hand, a hand which paralyzes every manifestation of the human spirit, not only all forms of art, but even philosophy and religion. What is National Socialism but a state philosophy or a state religion? If we are going to oppose National Socialism in the fundamentals of its faith, then we must first and foremost deny this worship of the nation and the state. When Hitler says that the only reality is the nation we must say No: the only reality is the human being. When Hitler says that art is a direct expression of the being and ethos of the nation, we must say No: art is a direct expression of the emotion and vision of the individual—of one man speaking to the people and for the people, of one man speaking to and for the whole of humanity. But we cannot logically say such things if in the same breath we deny the individual by advocating a form of socialism which, in the pursuit of economic or political ideals, establishes a bureaucracy to which all the ways of life are subordinated.

This past quarter of a century through which we have lived has one bitter lesson for all of us. In one country after another we have seen the revolutionary fervor which is the basis of our socialism perverted with apparent ease into an instrument of oppression. Let us take care that we, too, do not pervert the true doctrines of liberty and equality, and find too late that we have created a machine whose power we can no longer control—a machine which will carry us, helpless passengers, into the realm of totalitarian despotism. For I suggest that whatever we call it, any form of totalitarian collectivism is fatal to culture, simply because it cannot leave culture alone.

What, then, is the alternative? There is one other possibility. It is to abolish the artist—I mean, abolish the artist as an economic unit, as a separate profession. Art would then be produced, as it generally is today, by people who earn their living in some other way. The only duty of the community would be to see that everyone who wanted it had sufficient liberty to practice an art—and I mean liberty in the concrete sense of free time. It does not seem to me that this is an impossible ideal to aim at, but it is a general social ideal and not one which can be realized on behalf of art alone. It should be obvious that by the time we had reached such a degree of social development, certain types of artist would have been absorbed in the general organization of the life of the community. The architect, the sculptor, and even the painter would be no longer artists, but artisans, and as such organic units in the building guild; the composer and the dramatist would be artisans in the theater guild. In fact, about the only social misfit would be the poet, and except for poets laureate and political propagandists like Virgil and Pope, they have always been left out in the cold.

When I say that we should abolish the artist, what I really mean is that we should all become artists. It is this horrible distinction between art and ordinary things, between artists and ordinary men, which is the mark or symptom of the disease of our civilization. When we have put that civilization to rights, we shall be less conscious of our culture but we shall have more of it.

As I present it, this idea may have the appearance of a paradox, but it is not original. It was the conclusion reached by that great artist and great socialist, William Morris: a man who thought deeply on this very problem of culture and liberty. Morris perhaps tended to simplify the problem, in both his reading of the past and his vision of the future. But one thing he saw clearly: that in the society of the future the division between the artist and the artisan which is so characteristic of our present civilization had to disappear. All through Morris's work runs the essential thought, that if you establish the right form of society, culture will be added to it as naturally as is the color to the rose. And as for the right form of society, let me describe it in Morris's own words:

> It is a society which does not know the meaning of the words rich and poor, or the rights of property, or law or legality, or nationality: a society which has no consciousness of being governed; in which equality of condition is a matter of course, and in which no man is rewarded for having served the community by having the power given him to injure it.

It is possible that I should say more about bringing culture to the people, but it seems to me that it is useless to bring culture to people who have not been prepared for it. In other words, we have to bring the people to culture. And to do this we have to begin at the bottom and build up. Any extensive change in the cultural level of the nation can only be brought about by a long process of education which will in itself be an essential part of our social revolution. And by a long process of education I do not mean university extension lectures on the painters of the Renaissance. I don't mean cultural education of any kind: again I say, make your social revolution and let culture take care of itself. What I do mean is nothing less than a drastic reform of the whole technique of education. We don't, at present, educate children to use their senses: we teach them as quickly as possible to master abstract symbols and the processes of conceptual thought, and by the age of eleven or twelve the child has become a thinking-machine of sorts—a ma-

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chine which will, in the course of time, take its place in the counting-house and be able to absorb a daily portion of newspaper dope. But this machine has lost the faculties it had whilst still an unspoiled child. It has lost its instinctive sense of rhythm and harmony, its vivid imagination and spontaneous delight. This is perhaps the essential problem, for what is the meaning of culture to people who are mentally blind and deaf; and what is the use of liberty to people whose sensuous faculties are stiff with confinement, wasted for want of exercise?

Though the workers of the world may lose their chains, what will their new liberty benefit them if they find they cannot any longer move their limbs like free men? The only freedom that matters is the freedom to dance—the freedom to escape from the routine and necessary steps of our economic activities, and to take the air like gods. I am talking like a poet, but the poet in each one of you knows what I mean. You know, like Hölderlin, that there is a spirit which infuses vigor and nobility into human activity and serenity into suffering, which brings into cities and dwellings love and brotherhood. That spirit is the spirit of true culture, and its descent among us is the breath of true liberty.

# New Year Letter

*THE DOUBLE MAN.* By W. H. Auden. Random House. $2.

IN 1931 Pope's ghost said to me, "Ten years from now the leading young poet of the time will publish, in the *Atlantic Monthly,* a didactic epistle of about nine hundred tetrameter couplets." I answered absently, "You are a fool"; and who on this earth would have thought him anything else? But he was right: the decline and fall of modernist poetry—if so big a swallow, and a good deal of warm weather, make a summer—were nearer than anyone could have believed. The poetry which came to seem during the 'twenties the norm of all poetic performance—experimental, lyric, obscure, violent, irregular, determinedly antagonistic to didacticism, general statement, science, the public—has lost for the young its once obsessive attraction; has evolved, in Auden's latest poem, into something that is almost its opposite. New Year Letter (which, with many notes and a few lyrics, forms "The Double Man") is a happy compound of the Essay on Man and the Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot, done in a version of Swift's most colloquial couplets. Pope might be bewildered at the ideas, and make fun of, or patronizingly commend, the couplets; but he would relish the Wit, Learning, and Sentiment—the last becoming, as it so often does, plural and Improving; and the Comprehending Generality, Love of Science, and Social Benevolence might warm him into the murmur, "Well enough for such an age." How fast the world changes! and poetry with it! What he would have said of the more characteristic glories of "Gerontion," the "Cantos," or "The Bridge," I leave to the reader's ingenuity.

New Year Letter contains Auden's ideas about everything (Life and the Good Life, Art and Society, Politics, Morals, Love, the Devil, Economic Man), organized inside a successfully concrete framework of what he has read and seen and met with. Auden's ideas once had an arbitrary *effective* quality, a personality value, almost like ideas in Lawrence or Ezra Pound. They seem today less colorful but far more correct—and they are derived from, or are conscious of, elements over most of the range of contemporary thought. Sometimes the reader exclaims delightedly, "What a queer thing for a *poet* to know!" (This replaces the resentful remark of the 'twenties: "What a queer thing for anybody to know!") The poets of the last generation were extremely erudite, but their erudition was of the rather specialized type that passed as currency of the realm in a somewhat literary realm. About Darwin, Marx, Freud and Co., about all characteristically "scientific" or "modern" thinkers most of them concluded regretfully: "If they had not existed, it would not have been necessary to ignore them." (Or deplore them.) In their comparison of the past and the present, the present came off, not even a poor, but a disgraceful second; "and this was not surprising," as Carroll says, since the values by which they judged—the whole climate of their judgment—were desperately and exclusively those of the past. They constituted a forlorn hope we must admire but understand. Auden's culture and doctrines are more accessible and plausible than theirs to the ordinary cultivated person, whose thought is not now essentially religious, literary, reactionary, or anti-scientific. And the manner of Auden's knowledge surprises as much as the matter; there is none of the atmosphere of stupefying scope and profundity of information that has accompanied Pound's and Eliot's application of the methods of the industrial revolution to literature: so far as Auden's tone is concerned, London and Rome are still untouched by American hands, the great *Volkerwanderung* of the barbarian scholars has never occurred.

New Year Letter seems to me, within certain limits, a great success. It is thoroughly readable: Auden handles with easy virtuosity humorous and serious material—sometimes his method of joining them verges on simple Byronic alternation, but they tend to be swept together by the tone and verse-movement, rapid, informal, and completely adaptable. The poetry, strained through so many abstractions, is occasionally a little pale; but it *is* poetry. Auden has accomplished the entirely unexpected feat of making a successful long poem out of a reasonable, objective, and comprehensive discussion. It is kept concrete or arresting by many devices: wit, rhetoric, all sorts of images (drawn from the sciences, often); surprising quotations, allusions, technical terms, points of view, shifts of tone; he treats ideas in terms of their famous advocates, expresses situations in little analogous conceits; and he specializes in unexpected coordinates, the exquisitely ridiculous term—he is remarkably sensitive to the levels and interactions of words. The poem is not quite first-rate. It lacks the necessary finality of presentation; it is at a remove; the urgency and reality have been diluted. Evil is talked about but not brought home; there is a faint sugary smell of *tout comprendre est tout pardonner*: everything is going to be all right in the end. When one remembers his earlier poetry at its best, one feels unreasonably homesick for the fleshpots of Egypt. But these are almost too many qualifications: it is a valuable, surprising poem.

In the notes there are quotations, aphorisms, exposition,

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verse, a few poems: if not God's plenty, at least, plenty. Some notes are valuable in themselves, some amplify or locate the poem's ideas; but these water a positive desert of Good Sense: machine-made parables, forced definitions, humorless half-truths, with which we wearily dissent or impatiently agree. (The notes specialize in neither the High nor the Low, but the Mean Sublime.) To the question, "What is the only thing that always remains work, that can never give us aesthetic satisfaction?" Auden replies, *the ethical;* the victims of his insistent raids on the Moral can ruefully agree. The lyrics called The Quest (conscientiously flat, abstract, and characteristic parables) seem to me rather uninterestingly unsuccessful.

I've made my review general because I wanted to emphasize, like the advertisements: "This poem's *different*"; some people who don't ordinarily read modern poetry might enjoy New Year Letter. Since I've no space for what I should like—a careful discussion of its ideas and technique—let me finish simply by saying that it is worth buying.

RANDALL JARRELL

# The Problem Stated

*MODERN DEMOCRACY*. By Carl L. Becker. Yale University Press. $2.

IN HIS "The Heavenly City of the Eighteenth Century Philosophers" Professor Becker revealed with what skill and profundity he could portray the essential spirit of an age and how nicely his gentle cynicism could discount its foibles and illusions. In this slight, and yet weighty, book he proves himself as able a social philosopher as he is an historian of philosophies. The whole problem which confronts the democratic world has not been stated more lucidly, neatly, and wisely than in this brief analysis.

The first of the three chapters is, in a sense, a recapitulation of the earlier book. It traces the democratic ideals and hopes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and describes the faith which now seems "somewhat naive" to us because we know that it "placed a far greater reliance upon the immediate influence of good will and rational discussion in shaping the conduct of men than is possible for us to do." The second chapter describes the "earthly counterpart" of this "ideal form laid up in heaven." It might be said in passing that the sorry realities of a dying capitalistic society have a somewhat different relation to eighteenth century hopes than the inevitably imperfect realization of a plan has to the ideal pattern. They are, rather, a tragic refutation of imperfect plans and foolish hopes. But this slight defect in the logic of the book does not impair the value of the analysis of present reality in the second chapter. We see how the "liberal-democratic ideology which middle-class liberals professed in theory and denied in practice" destroyed the power of the landed aristocracy only to become an ideological instrument for the new plutocratic oligarchy of modern civilization. Industrial society has maximized and centralized economic power; and the economic oligarchy has used the old ideas of freedom to preserve its irresponsibility and to prevent political control of its power. "If the democratic way of life is to survive," he declares, "we must distinguish the kinds of individual freedom which are essential to it from those that are unessential and disastrous." In the former category he places those "which the individual enjoys in his intellectual and political activities," and in the latter are "the relatively unrestrained liberties of his economic activities."

The problem of democracy is how to curb "the flagrant inequality of possessions and opportunity" without destroying essential liberties. The Russian experience proves that the loss of political and intellectual liberties is a high price to pay for economic equality. Yet it is still possible for Western civilization to stumble into a solution as bad as the Russian or the German one if we do not solve our economic problem. Dr. Becker is certain that an economic oligarchy must be brought under social control if democracy is to be saved. He thinks it is possible to do this without revolution or dictatorship, though he is of course not certain that it will be done. He thinks it important that though no ruling class has ever surrendered power voluntarily it is a *non sequitur* to conclude that it would surrender only under the compulsion of "naked force." He recognizes to what degree the international conflict complicates the problem of achieving domestic justice but he does not for that reason suggest that democracy ought not to defend itself against external perils. None of his conclusions are altogether new nor is the analysis which leads to his conclusions novel. The value of the book lies in the clarity and economy of thought and word with which the problem of democracy is analyzed so that one feels oneself carried toward his conclusions by an irrefutable logic.

The publishers of this book ought to be reminded that books are priced not according to their intrinsic worth but according to their size. This book, containing no more than 25,000 words, ought to cost only half of the $2 demanded for it.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

# European Poetry Displayed

*A REVOLUTION IN EUROPEAN POETRY: 1660-1900.* By Emery Neff. Columbia University Press. $3.

DR. NEFF'S book is described on its jacket as "the only short history of European poetry since the Renaissance." It is incredible that this should be true; but as one considers, it seems all too possible that it is. Dr. Neff traces the enormous influence of French literary taste, during and after Louis XIV's reign, upon the countries of Europe; and the ferments produced in this taste, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, by German literature and thought, a revived interest in Greece and Rome and the Orient, and political dislocations. At the end modern poetry emerges, after the appearance in France of Baudelaire, Rimbaud, and Verlaine.

Such an account is long overdue, and one is grateful for a new emphasis, not usual in histories of literature written in English, upon the European scene as a whole, rather than upon what went on in England alone. And although it is addressed specifically to "students and teachers of comparative literature," the general reader can share in this panoramic outlook, and watch the interplay of forces which lead to increasingly complex expression in modern poetry. In America interest in these European sources was dropped when the

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1930's arrived with their material difficulties. "Axel's Castle" was not followed up, as it should have been, by further detached discussion and by translations of works cited. The result has been that American poetry in the past decade, when not completely provincial, was muddled as to its derivations.

The subject, as the author states, is, of course, immense. His method, on the whole, is admirable. He condenses in a masterly way, and writes coolly and clearly. He has refused to use the tags "neo-classical," "romantic," and whatnot; and, these often academic partitions once removed, the narrative moves with breadth and sweep. J. G. Robertson has said:

> There is manifest danger in the ineradicable instinct of our minds to classify and schematize. We love our antitheses: classicism-romanticism; idealism-realism; collectivism-individualism. But with fuller knowledge comes clearness that such antitheses are inherently unreal; the evolution of thought shows no such sharp contrasts, no such hard and fast lines. Nature makes no leaps; and the progress of human ideas, far from being a geometric progression, is an infinitely complicated growth, where one thought passes into its antithesis imperceptibly, like a dissolving view.

The need for these antitheses seems most real in a comparison of the arts of language. Because language is the carrier of ideas, it is easy to believe that it should be very little else than such a carrier. Comparative histories of architecture, painting, music, and even of "taste," escape bias more easily than comparative studies of the arts of language. Then it must be remembered that there are barriers in language. Linguistics are not needed in order to appreciate Palestrina, Mozart, Couperin, Purcell; or Piranesi, Dürer, Watteau, Constable. With poetry the ear and eye are not enough.

It cannot be said that Dr. Neff does much toward clarifying the inner qualities of the poetry with which he deals. He tends to tie up the spiritual with the turn of events and historic processes: changes of government, wars and their aftermaths, industrial changes, and alternate political enthusiasm and disillusionment. It has been said: "The critic . . . to reach the essence of poetry, must realize that he walks into a domain where the essential does not coincide with the most general, but with the most 'interior.'" But when we grant Neff's slight set toward the idea that poetry stems directly from the specific event (or in reaction against the specific event), his account of the historic background is thorough in the extreme. And when poets can be directly related to this background, he seldom makes an error, and very rarely an omission. He gives as admirably concise a description of the nature of French seventeenth-century taste as of Goethe's development and the development of "Faust." He is also brilliantly thorough with the post-Napoleonic period: the rise of money; the struggle for civil rights and the rights of labor, in England and France; and the reactions of certain poets to these upheavals and transformations. He does a splendid job of disentangling the beginnings of modern criticism, giving Lessing and Herder their just due; and he performs another service in bringing out and relating to their age the great and neglected talents of Hölderlin, Leopardi, and Vigny.

Historical events, however, can never completely explain poetry. Poetry is often generations in advance of the thought of its time. It is often a throwback. Many imponderables make up the climate of literature. The often irrational turns of taste; the almost religious currents of guilt, fear, desperation, and disillusion (or of peace and release) must be taken into account in the study of any art. Comparisons must include differences as well as likenesses. The gaps in Dr. Neff's scholarly (and truly valuable) correlation of poetic works, important events, and sources of ideas are consistently *lacunae* where might appear the poet or thinker out of series: the man who carried the past in him unresolved, or the man, not of his time, who is to be a force in the future.

For example, the works of Vico (not mentioned) were known, according to Robertson, to both Goethe and Herder. In 1681, when Boileau's *"Art Poetique"* (of which Neff makes much) was being translated into English, Edward Young, the first precursor of the English Gothic Revival (of which Neff makes little) was born. Gray's enthusiasm for Ossian is put on record; but there is no mention of Gray's friend, Horace Walpole (whose Strawberry Hill has been described as "less an archaeological reconstruction than the expression of a state of soul"). Neff, with partial truth, traces Gothic interest to Germany and Bürger's *"Lenore"* (1774). But Walpole was reviving Gothic in England twenty years previous to this; and certainly native English Gothic stands behind both The Ancient Mariner and Christabel. (Neff does not speak of Gothic but of "Wonder"; but how much more than "Wonder" was this secularized return of medieval Catholicism into Protestantism, always accompanied by a mask of anti-Papistry!) Byron paid open tribute to William Beckford, another precursor, and to Beckford's "Vathek" and Johnson's "Rasselas," as sources of Eastern color. "Vathek" appeared twenty years before Kubla Khan was written.

It is, of course, ridiculous to push back influences too far; but should not that friend of Winckelmann, Piranesi—the "picturesque" artist who was, oddly enough, responsible for "Adam" in England and "Empire" in France—be given some notice, along with Winckelmann? And, if it is rather one-sided of Dr. Neff to emphasize the classicism in eighteenth century England at the expense of the century's Gothic side (the two streams went on concurrently, according to good authority, from 1750 to 1830), it is certainly impossible to explain how German influence got into France without mentioning Madame de Staël. (Neff does not allow Madame de Staël in his text; merely in his appended chronology.) Madame de Staël, according to Thibaudet, smuggled Romanticism into France "through the 'gulf' of Geneva and Coppet." Again, though Dr. Neff states outright that his method is necessarily selective, it is certainly odd that so much is made of Hugo and Leconte de Lisle (both of whom, of course, bring out a great many of the points Neff stresses: the political enthusiasms of the one; the disillusion with politics, and consequent "escape" into exotic themes, of the other) while nothing whatever is said of Béranger, Gérard de Nerval, or Banville. Béranger, the most popular post-Revolution poet in France, died in the year of *"Bovary"* and *"Les Fleurs du Mal"* (how ironically these events complete one another!). Nerval was "the only French poet able to bring the actual feeling of the German ballad over into French poetry; the one French poet of the time completely

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open to the legend and music of Germany." Banville, admired by Baudelaire, far from being made gloomy by political events, "mocked the Empire while adoring it," and wrote of exotic subjects in the most cheerful way.

Dr. Neff ends his book with the usual sad thoughts on *"fin de siècle."* But in 1900 poetry in Europe was just about to pass into a new era of brilliance: Yeats, Rilke, Valéry, Apollinaire, were alive and soon to produce modern work unmatched in depth, subtlety, and complexity. The true synthesis, of which Neff certainly has a conception, must not only range widely but plunge deeply under the surface of events. One need not be either morbid or a mystic to know that this is true: such syntheses have been accomplished time and again in histories of arts other than literature. Certainly it is in the direction of *"Einfühling"* that the liberation and future of comparative literature lies. Meanwhile, Dr. Neff has written a valuable book which should serve as a rational point of reference for students and the general reader alike.

LOUISE BOGAN

# The Right to Continuity

*TOWARD A PHILOSOPHY OF HISTORY.* By José Ortega y Gasset. W. W. Norton and Company. $2.75.

THE last time I saw Ortega—we were seated on a bench in the Bois de Boulogne in Paris a few weeks before the war—he said: "Until now I have been only a journalist, an occasional writer. It is only now that I am beginning a scientific work, the sum of my thought on history and society." I was happy therefore to find again in the present volume the old Ortega who is pleased to call himself a journalist but whom I persist in regarding with Paul Valéry as our greatest musician of ideas.

This collection of meditations and lectures has unity only in its depth, in its style of thought; but it is an exemplary style. Ortega is a virtuoso in the plastic presentation and illustration of ideas. Let us try to follow the development of one of the fundamental themes of this book: "Life is an affair of flutes. It is overflow that it needs most." Ortega projects first a new theory about the "sportive" origin of the state. According to him, it is the excess of vitality in the companionships of young men gathered together for the abduction of women and for barbarous adventure, the dionysiac play of juvenile energy avid to expend itself freely, which creates, as a by-product, the discipline and the martial order preliminary to civil legality. From the same idea of vital exuberance Ortega proceeds to develop an essay on technique. Man is the sole being in the world who has the primordial need and the power to disengage himself from nature. He can do it by suicide. He does it especially by fabricating a world which conforms to his inexhaustible fantasy and to his need for frenzy: the world of technique. The bow is a useful instrument, but it was perhaps first an instrument of music. The energy which invents a tool, domesticates fire, spends its effort in creating machines which permit more leisure—this energy greatly overflows immediate necessity and utility: it is pure excess, a projection of the imagination. So much for the ideas. But this whole complex of sociological analyses is finally summed up in a counterpoint of images of marvelous elegance: "The expression most fragrant with the scent of life . . . is to my mind the word *incitement.*" This expression would have no meaning in physics, where one knows only the causes producing proportionate effects. It is the very word for unforeseeable life. The reaction of a thoroughbred to the lightest incitation of the spur "is a release of exuberant energy." The horse then becomes a splendid image of stirring life. "Thus we imagine the magnificent stallion whom Caligula called Incitatus and made a member of the Roman Senate." Here the thought of Ortega reverts to his poor Spain with its energies mutilated or put to sleep. And he tells this story: Workers were digging in a garden in Cordova. They uncovered the head and then part of the body of a bronze horse of the Roman epoch. The proprietor of the patio, deciding that the excavation was too expensive, ordered the statue to be covered with earth again. "And there he remained in his tomb, incredible though it seems, the Spanish Incitatus with his fine strong neck and his sensitive, foam-flecked mouth. . . . But one might fancy that if one held one's ear to the ground one would hear the desperate subterranean neighing of the great bronze horse." Who may yet incite him? So in this book I hear our buried Europe, our past.

Let us note that Ortega is not at all driven by the modern and puerile urge "to give concrete examples" in order to economize the effort of thought. His images rise from the depths of a prolonged meditation, of which he wishes to distill only the quintessence in a symbol durable and chiseled, like the bronze of the Spanish Incitatus. A theoretical formula weakens and limits, but a symbol orients and incites. These essays, which will please the American reader because of their freedom from abstraction and because of their plasticity, are in reality the last flowers of a European thought desperately ripe, which takes on the perfect elegance of an apparent facility, of a sparkling conversation.

But one will find also in this book the beginning of something very important: the elements of a philosophy and of a politics of *continuity.* Ortega is in process of discovering that the reality of man is not in his reason but in his history, in the trajectory of his past which alone orients his invention. Koehler has shown that memory alone distinguishes man from the ape. The chimpanzee does not lack intelligence, but for want of memory he is obliged each morning to begin his study of the world all over again. Incapable of possessing his past, he cannot evaluate his present action. On the other hand, "man's real treasure is the treasure of his mistakes. . . . It is because of this that Nietzsche defined man as the being *with the longest memory.*"

Ortega expresses here the great, hard lesson, the only lesson which Europe, fatherland of Memory, can bequeath to younger civilizations. It is, in a certain sense, a "reactionary" lesson. In opposition to revolutionary utopianism Ortega repeats that the first right of man is the right to continuity. He affirms the objective existence of social structures, of the accumulated past, which one cannot ignore or sweep away without depriving creative action of all meaning. This position has the evident advantage of transcending the old right-left conflict at the moment when confusion is such that "today we are offered a prospect of tyranny from the left while the right promises revolution. . . ."

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DENIS DE ROUGEMONT

# "Archie" and "The Bull"

*ALLENBY: A STUDY IN GREATNESS.* By General Sir Archibald Wavell. Oxford University Press. $3.

MANY readers are likely to turn to this book, not so much because of interest in its subject—the most successful British general of World War I—but because they seek light upon its author—unquestionably the outstanding British military leader of World War II. From this angle General Wavell's study may prove disappointing. Superficially it does little to satisfy curiosity about its author, who effaces himself completely.

Nevertheless, reading this book against the background of dispatches from Cairo during the past six months, we realize how well General Wavell has digested the lessons Allenby taught him. He would be the first to deprecate any comparison, but it seems to me that his own achievement in Libya outstrips that of Allenby in Palestine. It is true that in the Turks and their German advisers Allenby had a tougher adversary than Graziani's Italians. On the other hand, Allenby's army had a marked superiority both in men and material over that of the enemy, while in Libya Wavell faced odds of a magnitude that the world has yet to appreciate.

It is not easy to describe to the satisfaction of laymen the course of a modern campaign, but General Wavell, with the aid of some useful maps, has contrived to give an extremely lucid account of the battles in which Allenby drove the Turks out of Palestine.

When Allenby took over the command in June, 1917, the Eastern Expeditionary Force was in a discouraged mood. After its two attempts to carry Gaza had been heavily repulsed by the Turks, it was holding a line south of this strongly fortified city. Morale rapidly improved, however, when Allenby, never an office-general, moved his headquarters from Cairo to near the front and, in a series of first-hand inspections, impressed his initiative and resolution on the army.

Meanwhile, he was maturing his plans for breaking the Turkish lines. The first essential was intense and detailed organization of communications and supply. His scheme involved a large-scale cavalry operation against the enemy's left wing at Beersheba, and for this to be carried out under desert conditions, water supplies had to be calculated almost to the last half-pint. The thrust at Beersheba was devised to turn the Turkish flank and render the position of the Gaza garrison untenable. The strictest secrecy had to be observed, and elaborate strategems were employed to persuade the enemy that the desert operations were merely a feint.

The success of this ruse was confirmed when Allenby opened the battle with a heavy land and sea bombardment of Gaza that diverted the Turkish commander's attention from the strong concentration of troops on his right wing, so that he failed to reinforce the comparatively light defenses of Beersheba. These were quickly mastered by a British infantry corps after a great night march across the desert. Meanwhile, a cavalry division had ridden in a wide circle around the Turkish flank and, after heavy fighting, charged into the town of Beersheba in time to save its precious wells from destruction. Whereupon Allenby swung his infantry against the Turkish center in a move threatening to bottle up the Gaza garrison. As a result this stronghold was abandoned and the Turks, with the British at their heels, started a long retreat. A month later Allenby was in Jerusalem.

There are a good many points of resemblance between this battle and that of Sidi Barrani, which was also captured by a carefully concealed and sweeping flank attack. But this time tanks played the role which Allenby assigned to his cavalry. Wavell's relentless pursuit of the Italians was also patterned on the tactics of his old commander. "In pursuit," he quotes Allenby as saying, "you must always stretch possibilities to the limit. Troops having beaten the enemy will want to rest. They must be given as objectives not those that you think they will reach, but the farthest they could possibly reach."

The portrait of Allenby painted in this book is, in many respects, that of a conventional British officer. But he had one outstanding characteristic to raise him above the ruck of his fellow generals—a ranging mind that sought information outside the narrow boundaries of his profession. He was widely read and widely traveled and he would always listen to men who had the facts. Consequently he was more able than the average soldier to tackle problems ignored by the textbooks. A notable example was his quickness to adapt his tactics to those of the enemy when, during the South African war, the "unsportsmanlike" Boers refused to recognize the time-honored barrack-square rules.

But, as Wavell declares, in the military profession "character is of greater importance than brains or experience," for without courage, drive, and a complete sense of responsibility the most brilliant plans are liable to collapse. These qualities Allenby had, as he had also an unswerving loyalty to his superiors and a rare ability to trust his own subordinates. Nevertheless as a leader he was respected rather than liked. His army nickname—"The Bull"—was earned not so much by his massive physique as by his extreme irascibility. "He lacked," says his biographer, "a measure of self-control, a little humanity, the power to communicate enthusiasm, and to inspire disciples."

These qualities, absent in Allenby, are, according to those who know him, outstanding in Wavell, which helps to explain the way in which he has welded his very heterogeneous forces into the amazingly effective Army of the Nile. His own nickname, "Archie," certainly suggests affection, and stray quotations from his talks to his men, which have reached me, indicate a realization that the soldier in a democratic army must be treated like a man and not as a robot. His dictum that the ideal infantryman should have "the qualities of a successful poacher, a cat burglar, and a gunman" sounds like a quotation from Tom Wintringham,

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former captain in the International Brigade. And still more alien to the spirit of brass-hattery is his New Year's message to the army: "Have you ever thought what a world we could make if we put into peace endeavors the same energy, the same self-sacrifice and cooperation as we use in the wastefulness of war?"

KEITH HUTCHISON

# A Poetry of Wit and Conscience

*SELECTED POEMS.* By John Peale Bishop. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.

MR. BISHOP is one of the few men now writing in America or elsewhere who recognize the privileges, tests, and ordeal of the aesthetic discipline. He descends from the second generation of poets who imported the lessons and enrichment of French Symbolism, but the American theme and sentiment in his work, its insistence on the emotion of the repatriated exile and the plight of the artistic apprentice coming to terms with a domestic tradition, make him more a figure in the line of Stickney than of Pound or Eliot. The affinity of his later poems with the moral and traditional problems of Ransom or Tate is not emphasized; his lyrics on Southern or New England subjects mix almost indistinguishably with those on the conflict of culture and character, past and present, tradition and conscience, in the wider context of aesthetic, European, and historical symbols. But the unity in these selected poems derives from his effort to return, after widely eclectic experiences in art and the sophistication of New York and Paris, to his native roots and loyalties, his moral plight as an individual, and to the recovery of his local habitation and a name. It is possible to trace almost systematically his translation of the images of his earlier discoveries in art (France, antiquity, Shakespeare, English classicists, Provençal poetry, pictures, books) into the imagery of his American inheritance (Virginia, Cape Cod, colonial houses and villages, local legends, Connecticut summers and winters). Yet these contrasts remain fixed within a framework of wider references and derivations—in allegories of personal doubt and conflict or in the analogies of ancient myth and folk tradition. Mr. Bishop still respects the impersonal discipline and objective moral sense of his Symbolist teachers. His work asks to be considered as poetry before it makes its appeal as a private history or an American document.

The difficulty of his task is thus a high and honorable one, since he tends to hold aloof from the topical, social, or dramatic claims that make the poetry of his contemporaries exciting. He has attempted to make objective and critical his natural impressionability of temper, to apply it to a moral judgment upon himself, and to make his language and symbols self-sufficient in that purpose. On that score he wins respect and meets his severest test as a poet. For this specific poetic ambition in his work never succeeds in rising wholly free of his limited personal situation. His symbolic poems remain deliberate and bookish; his moral allegories lean too heavily on intimate references and appeals to gain the air of a genuine imaginative freedom. A sharp diffidence of taste keeps him from exploiting his American character, just as his knowledge of the full scope and complexity of his moral


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problem has kept him from making extravagant capital of his literary and cultural privileges. As a result, he has relied on decorum to mediate between these opposed attractions to the point where decorum neutralizes, chills, and enervates their separate passions. Baudelaire and Rimbaud made their greatest poetry directly out of their private havoc and torment; Mallarmé made his out of his sense of symbolic absolutes; each of them made it by finding a reality for his words and style that would make a reality of his particular vision. The lesser Symbolists fell between these powers. Vielé-Griffin and Merrill were masters of the discretion, the taste, and the scrupulously self-conscious sensibility that must be counted on to take the place of intense symbolic vision or supremely passionate selfhood in a poet.

It is in their line that Mr. Bishop stands; his work has everything that taste, finish, and conscience can give it; it has what Mr. Tate has called "a settled view of the nature of man which is essentially religious and committed to the belief that poetry must look at man under the head of eternity." The virtues of that view are intelligence, seriousness, and a severe self-respect, but there can be no question about what keeps it from achieving a fully created and impassioned art.

The poems that show the greatest delicacy and control of medium here are those that express most pointedly the subtle poise and aristocracy of Mr. Bishop's intelligence—In the Dordogne, Trinity of Crime, The Ancestors, Another Actaeon, Speaking of Poetry, October Tragedy, Behavior of the Sun. The American poems in Part IV are prevented by moral and personal earnestness from achieving the same balance of formal mastery and wit. But when Mr. Bishop projects his emotion of conflict and pathos less guardedly he achieves something which is to me finer than what he arrives at in either of these groups—the more genuine lyric pathos, with its rhythmic and verbal realism, that comes in Encounter, Crucifixion, and The Tree. It is in these poems that we get the authority of words and emotion that indicates a true union of sophistication with conscience and that forms a likely basis for Mr. Bishop's fuller mastery of his problem.

MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL

# Newman's Wagner

*THE LIFE OF RICHARD WAGNER.* Volume Three, 1859-1866. By Ernest Newman. Alfred A. Knopf. $5.

AS IMPORTANT as anything that has happened this year is Ernest Newman's publication of the third volume of his "Life of Richard Wagner." It appears four years after the second volume; and this delay is inherent in the very nature of what Newman is doing. Where other biographers, he claims, have repeated what he calls *fable convenue,* he is piecing together the story of Wagner's life and period from source material; and he offers his work not only as biography but as an example of correct biographical procedure. The staggering quantity and complexity of the material would make his way of destroying legend and establishing truth difficult enough; but in addition there is the fact that the letters and other documents have been made available only gradually; and he has been delayed by the constant inflow of new material.

To the process of writing this biography Newman brings his lifetime of absorption in the subject, his incredible industry and patience, his eye for what is significant in a document, his ability to piece details together and weld them—with the aid of a lively, if somewhat unconcentrated style—into a fascinating narrative. Since he offers the work as an example of the correct biographical procedure that he opposes to the *fable convenue* of other writers and to the original work of Glasenapp, who "is so blind a partisan that his interpretation of a document, the amount of selection he may make from it, or the general use to which he may put it, can never be relied on," it is well to bear in mind that a few years ago Newman published a similar book on Liszt in which—Carl Engel was able to point out—his intense desire to correct a legendary falsehood led him to misuse documents in the same way as others had misused them on behalf of the falsehood. It may be, then, that Newman will be corrected by those who know the material he has used; but with that reservation one may allow oneself to be fascinated by a narrative which, in this volume, takes Wagner from the Paris production of "Tannhäuser" in 1860 through the disaster of the Vienna "Tristan," the generous patronage of Ludwig II and its end in further disaster, to the flight from Munich and settling with Cosima in Triebschen in 1866.

The truths that Newman establishes concerning these matters in place of long-accepted notions would take more space than I have; I prefer to point out, as Newman does, their bearing on another long-accepted notion which he is concerned with throughout this work. This is the notion—with which some composers of our own time have explained the indifference or dislike their music has encountered—that the work of a great artist is never rightly understood and valued by his contemporaries; and Wagner's career has been considered an outstanding example. But Newman has long disputed the notion; and he has shown that if Wagner was bitterly attacked he was as warmly defended; and that whatever the opposition of directors of opera houses and musicians whose comfortable routine was upset by his artistic demands, composers whose position was threatened by his ability, pedants who were outraged by his originality, some critics whose ideological positions were bound up with the established order in opera and operatic performance, other critics whose Jewish employers were offended by his anti-Semitism, government officials and others who were scandalized by his personal conduct and political heresy, and those who simply did not find his music to their taste, as some do not even today—this opposition was outweighed by the interest and enthusiasm with which other musicians and writers and the general music public in Germany welcomed his operas from the start, and which later, at a time when he was an exiled revolutionary, compelled the directors of the opera houses to beg him for permission to produce the works—permission which in some instances he refused out of fear that without his supervision the production would misrepresent the work. In 1852, Newman tells us in his second volume, "there arose that extraordinary demand for Wagner's scores that showed how swiftly the tide had begun to flow in his direction. . . . The Wagner operas created the greatest enthusiasm everywhere. Special trains were run to Schwerin, Weisbaden, and other places from neighboring towns. Schwerin alone gave fourteen

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performances of 'Tannhäuser' during 1852." Even the large court theaters—including even that of Dresden—had to yield to public interest: there were five performances of "Tannhäuser" in Dresden in 1852, twenty in Leipzig the next year. And what defeated Wagner in Vienna and Munich—Newman shows in the present volume—was again intrigue motivated in the ways I have described.

That was in Germany; and in this volume we learn about Paris. Newman's research and reasoning were answered a few years ago in the *New Republic* by Paul Rosenfeld—answered in part in anecdotal terms suitable for the *Etude;* and in the case of Wagner Mr. Rosenfeld cited a cartoon published in one of the French comic papers, which he characterized as "those clear mirrors of the man in the street"—a cartoon in which a mother said to her child who was playing the piano: "My child, you are striking nothing but false notes," and the child answered: "Oh, mama, these aren't false notes. This is 'Tannhäuser.' " The real significance of this cartoon we learn from the statement on the first page of Newman's third volume, amplified on later pages: "Wagner had to contend with the enmity of the corrupt Paris press, which, it is no secret today, was handsomely taken care of by the rich Meyerbeer." The press was, then, a mirror of the Paris professional musicians, whose fear and resentment of this dangerous outsider expressed itself also in persistent and vicious undercover mischief-making. But in Paris, as in Germany, Wagner had his supporters; and whatever the effect of the press on the man in the street it did not prevent the man in the concert hall and opera house from being interested and impressed. At the performances of "Tannhäuser" the interest and enthusiasm of the general public were defeated by the unprecedented organized rowdyism of the aristocrats of the Jockey Club, determined to slap down not only an alien composer who dared to defy their wishes, but through him Princess Metternich, and through her the policy of *rapprochement* with Austria. But "Wagner selections proved the greatest attractions at the Musard and Pasdeloup concerts during the next few months. Carvalho was only restrained from producing 'Tannhäuser' at the Théâtre-Lyrique by the fact that he could not find a suitable tenor. Roger . . . for his benefit at the Opéra-Comique . . . chose the third act of 'Tannhäuser' . . . —an unmistakable sign of the interest Paris still took in the work."

This seems conclusive; but I am sure we have not heard the last of "Oh, mama, these aren't false notes. This is 'Tannhäuser.' "

B. H. HAGGIN

## Superman and "Supermen"

*NIETZSCHE.* By Crane Brinton. Harvard University Press. $2.50.

IN THE age-long lawsuit, Taine *vs.* Carlyle, or Environment *vs.* Hero, the issue is still unsettled. Yet whenever a scapegoat has to be found for a national disaster, or an idol for exaltation at a triumph, public opinion is inclined to side with the defendant. Even so it seems idle to guess what rank Napoleon would have reached had he been born thirty years later or whether the Fuehrer would even now be adorning Viennese walls had he begun life thirty years earlier.


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Nonetheless hero-worship may prove quite useful: it has in Professor Brinton's book, which possibly would not have been written at all if it were not a part of the Nazi credo that Hitler and Mussolini answered Nietzsche's call for supermen.

Whatever the occasion, Crane Brinton's book is most welcome even if it does not exactly vindicate the editor's presumption that Nietzsche was one of the paramount "makers of Europe." An amazingly scrupulous study of the vast body of writings on Nietzsche supports the opinion that the philosopher whom a cruel fate, a loving sister, and "gentle" and "tough" Nietzscheans pushed into immortality, was indeed no genius, although he successfully overcompensated his "forty different kinds of inferiority complex." His "originality was largely a matter of intemperate vocabulary. . . . He is the nineteenth-century intellectual in a frenzy." His work contains "a great variety of ideas, sometimes mutually contradictory, difficult if not impossible to reduce to a 'system.'" Nazi professors of philosophy and, perhaps, "lustier anti-Christians like Mr. H. L. Mencken" may take exception to Professor Brinton's exquisite humor, but he is far from being unfair to Nietzsche's *oeuvre*.

Nietzsche may not have cleared and refreshed the air of European philosophy, as Will Durant wrote, but his "work is packed with admirable observations" which "bring to light . . . some of the basic illusions men live by" and he ranks "high among writers who have helped us to know ourselves." Moreover the author disproves the assumption put forth by British propaganda in World War I that Nietzsche's doctrine of the superman, his chapter Of War and Warriors in "Zarathustra," justified his being listed as one with Treitschke and Bernhardi in a "guilty" triumvirate. But does not the attempt "to make of him a kind of John the Baptist for the Savior Hitler" prove that he was a forerunner of the Third Reich? Nietzsche admired Voltaire and Heine and wrote in the "Genealogy of Morals": "What a blessing a Jew is among Germans"; he despised the *Deutschland ueber Alles* patriots; and he was fond of calling himself a "good European." All this offers little support to the Nazi claim. Professor Brinton himself points out many contradictions to the effort to enlist Nietzsche as "one of the pillars of the Nazi society." Therefore the statement that a bowdlerized Nietzsche, sufficiently "sublimated" in interpretation, "can suit almost anyone and serve almost any case" is the only excuse for the author's decision that Nietzsche "fits into National Socialist needs" because he damned democracy and praised authority.

Nietzsche's "will to power," a philosophic rather than a scientific term, differs essentially from ruthless Nazi aggression: neither Hitler nor Goebbels is exactly the prototype of the "blond beast," and the Nazi variety of supermen can hardly be associated with Nietzsche's abstractly planned new nobility. They are, indeed, as wide asunder as are the comic-strip hero and G. B. Shaw's conception—in "Man and Superman." And Nietzsche attacked theories of "race" as products of "herd morality."

This apparently will not do. But whether "gentle" Nietzscheans like it or not, the master has become part of the Nazi gospel, just as Andler, his French biographer has made of him—a socialist. I wonder if it would not be timely to suggest that famous authors, poets, and scholars be somehow insured against the misuse of their reputation for the support of the successful politicians and gangsters of history? If so, Professor Brinton's work could become a useful pattern. In addition, it is a most readable book, throwing a brilliant flashlight of erudition into the blackout of German philosophical terminology.

RUSTEM VAMBERY

# Gumtown as Social Laboratory

*LIFE, LIBERTY, AND PROPERTY.* By Alfred Winslow Jones. J. B. Lippincott Company. $3.50.

LARGE aggregates of human beings in a complex social order do not lend themselves readily to scientific analysis. Alfred Winslow Jones, who attempted such an analysis of Akron, Ohio, is exceedingly frank in admitting the difficulties met in the effort and the shortcomings of the data upon which his conclusions are based. Within these acknowledged limitations he has developed a technique and amassed a set of facts which are extremely interesting and which pave the way for much needed further study along these lines. The technique is not new. It consists of sampling public opinion, but within that familiar framework the approach has been subjected to many refinements so that the results impress the reader as being far superior to those gathered by nation-wide surveys of opinion which in recent years have been bandied about with pontifical certitude. The principal difference lies in the fact that the latter type of survey deals with current, "hot" issues, the views on which have been shaped to a large extent by widespread discussion in the press and over the air waves; whereas the Jones survey deals with eight questions only one of which was of immediate and personal concern to some of the people whose opinions were sought.

The 1,700 persons in and around Akron who were interviewed represent a thorough cross-section of the population, including business executives, small-business men, farmers, teachers, clergymen, clerks; trade union, company union, and non-union workers, and left-wing political parties. The questions were cast in the form of seven episodes representing organized infringement upon the rights of corporate property and one over-all question providing ten categories for the assignment of net corporate profits, ranging all the way from absentee owners to employees of the company. The episodes of infringement embraced bootlegging of coal in Pennsylvania; a stay-in strike by utility workers in the Saginaw Valley, Michigan; a threat by one of Akron's rubber companies to move its plant, with the consequent probable abrogation of some five thousand jobs; prevention by a group of farmers of a mortgage foreclosure at the depth of the depression; the ousting by police, with the aid of tear-gas, of sitdown strikers from the Fansteel plant in North Chicago; migration of a garment manufacturer in violation of a union-contract clause; and interference by neighbors to prevent the eviction of an unemployed worker for non-payment of rent.

Attitudes on these happenings, and on the distribution of profits, ranged all the way from complete defense to complete denial of property rights. But the extremes were represented by very small minorities, with big-business executives poised on one end and adherents to left-wing ideologies on the

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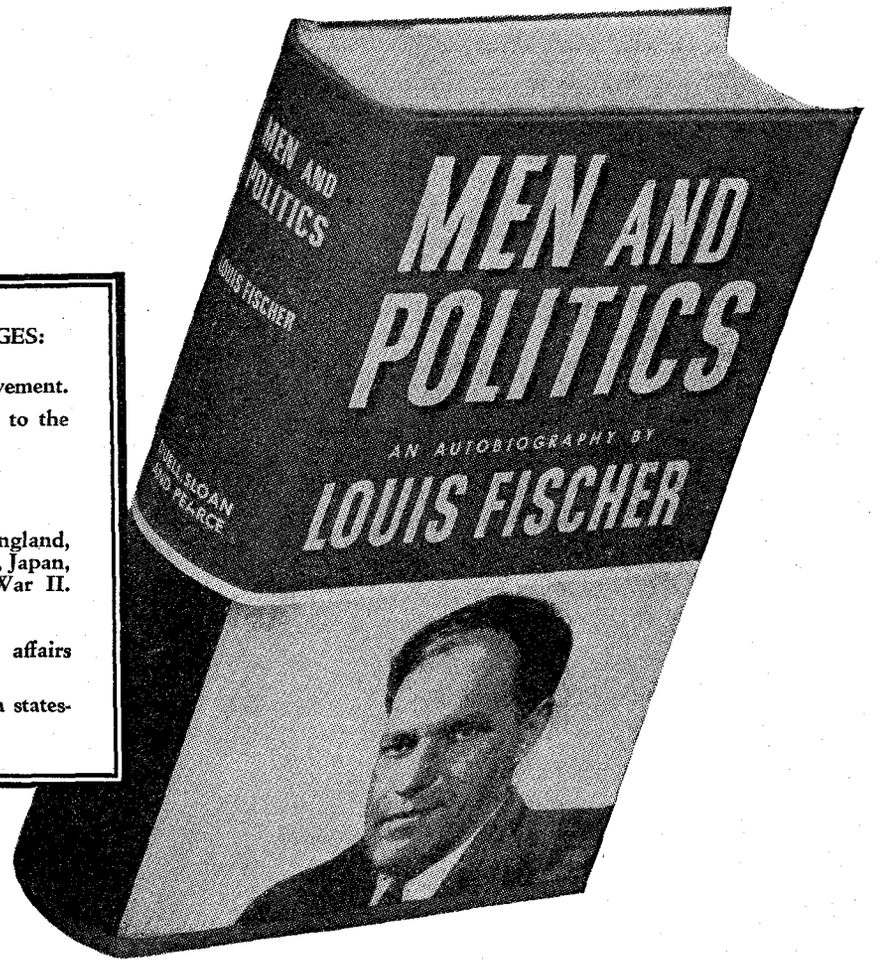


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other. Organized workers were far less extreme in their defense of labor and human rights than were employers in their defense of property rights. But the population as a whole recorded a score of 76 per cent for the central tendency. This led the author to conclude that the "central morality or ideology of our society bears on the workers so heavily as to make it unlikely that they can shake it off as long as the conditions that have created and perpetuated it persist." This central morality "is humanitarian and approves of acts in the interest of human welfare and alleviation of suffering even if they entail the infringement of corporate property. It approves of trade unions, and would like to see a well-led, unified, strong labor movement, but one that refrained from violence. The central morality is not pacifist, however, and would even approve of violence if there were wrongdoers that it thinks could be met in no other way."

In other words, while corporate property, as distinguished from other private property, is safely respected for the present, there is nothing to guarantee the permanence of this status. Akron, despite its highly industrial character, its wide approval of militant unionism, respects private property, but not, according to the findings, without reserve. The depression years resulted in significant shifts in the public attitude on social problems and their relation to property. Further shifts are possible if economic maladjustments become more aggravated.

It is a highly provocative book. Experts may argue and probably disagree on the validity of the techniques it employs, but the conclusions arrived at appear well borne out by observation and by history. The most readable parts of the book are the verbatim recordings of actual interviews. These reveal a degree of confused but independent thinking which is a most heartening testimonial to the vitality of our democracy.

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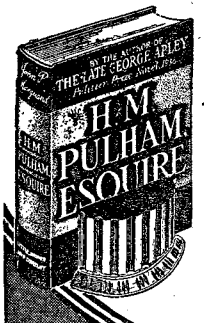


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PETER STEVENS is the pseudonym of an American writer now residing in Istanbul.

ANTHONY FIELD is an expert on European population problems.

HERBERT READ, author of "Reason and Romanticism," "The Meaning of Art," and many other distinguished volumes, was formerly Watson Gordon Professor of Fine Art at the University of Edinburgh. His present essay is based on a lecture delivered before the Fabian Society.

RANDALL JARRELL is an instructor in English at the University of Texas. He has contributed to the *Partisan Review,* the *New Republic,* the *Southern Review.*

LOUISE BOGAN, poetry reviewer for the *New Yorker,* is the author of "Body of This Death," "Dark Summer," and "The Sleeping Fury."

DENIS DE ROUGEMONT, French critic, poet, and playwright, is now in this country. An oratorium drawn from his play "Nicolas de Flue," with music by Arthur Honegger, is to be performed at Carnegie Hall in May.

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# DRAMA

## No Such Animal

IN "Watch on the Rhine" (Martin Beck Theater) Miss Lillian Hellman has demonstrated once again that she is a playwright of unusual resource and skill. The present work is being widely hailed as the best of the anti-Nazi dramas and there is, at least, no doubt that it is vastly superior to most. But I am not sure that I want to go much beyond that very qualified statement and I certainly do not believe that the author has solved completely the problem of writing on the subject a play whose chief interest is more than topical.

The problem is a very difficult one—perhaps nearly unsolvable—despite the current assumption that the existence of an important subject in which nearly everybody is interested ought to make important plays practically write themselves. Actually, the fact that nearly everybody *is* interested and that nearly everybody *is* informed creates the first of the difficulties even in the case of a frankly topical treatment. It is hard for the playwright to tell us anything we do not already know or to dramatize cruelty more effectively than events have already dramatized it. Thus, for example, Mr. Rice's "Flight to the West" is interesting of course but not as interesting as almost any daily paper, and Mr. Rice demonstrates nothing not demonstrated at least as impressively in a good news dispatch. Truth may be usually stranger than fiction, but facts stranger than any a playwright can invent are not always so clearly present before our very eyes.

Miss Hellman has tried to avoid this most obvious difficulty by choosing as her subject, not the major events, but a minor incident which must have repeated itself with variations a great many times and which implies the whole background of horror. Her scene is a quiet and prosperous home outside Washington. Her principal characters are an American family, two Rumanian refugees, and a daughter of the family who has just returned after twenty years abroad with a German husband gradually revealed to be an underground worker against fascism now planning to return to Germany with money he has collected in the United States. Through the machinations of one of the Rumanians, a blackmailer working for whichever side will pay him best, the Americans have gradually brought home to them, not only the atmosphere of Nazi intrigue, but also the fact that it can reach out into their own home, and the play ends with the mother and son of the house willingly conspiring in the escape of the German son-in-law after he has disposed of the blackmailer on their drawing-room floor.

Miss Hellman's drama is most effective in those portions least directly concerned with her main theme. She has obviously determined to avoid the flat didacticism and the thinness of characterization usually so painfully evident in thesis plays, and what is more she has succeeded. The atmosphere of the home is amusingly created and one of her characters, the solemn little son of the German, is a fine and pathetically humorous bit. So too, the domineering head of the home (beautifully played by Lucile Watson) and the anti-fascist himself (very effectively interpreted by Paul Lukas) are well conceived if somewhat more conventional characters. But the principal action itself does not escape a continuous suggestion of the artificially contrived, and at the very moments when the tension should be greatest one begins to feel that one has been through all this before, that an old-fashioned melodrama is being acted over again and that to call the villain a Rumanian spy in the pay of the Nazis or to insist that "the papers" are this time anti-fascist funds is not quite enough to make the whole seem real.

I am well aware of the fact that Miss Hellman might easily reply that such things as she has made the basis of the play do actually go on and that it is not her fault if this is a melodramatic world in which accredited dignitaries of the German government behave like villains of the ten-twenty-thirty. It is not, I grant, her fault; but it is, nevertheless, her misfortune. I am willing to admit that this is another instance in which life is imitating art but, from the standpoint of the playwright who would deal with this phase of contemporary life, it is too bad that life has chosen to imitate a form of art so elementary. In the theater one must accept the fact that we are easily reminded of theatrical convention no matter how ready we may be to admit intellectually that pro-Nazis actually behave like early Owen Davis scoundrels.

Let me suppose, to take an extreme example, that the Gestapo should suddenly take to tying its victims to buzz-saws or to placing them bound on the tracks of the midnight express. Indeed, and for all I know, it may actually be doing just that. But the incident would still not make a very good scene for a play and if I saw it on the stage I would still believe more firmly that it had happened before in plays than I would that it was also happening in Germany. The main difficulty with Miss Hellman's play is somewhat similar. Truth, as I previously granted, is stranger than fiction. But the artist must see to it that his fiction does not seem as strange as truth sometimes does and, above all, he must take care that his fiction does not too strongly suggest other fictions. Miss Hellman fails to do quite that. Her play is least convincing when it aims to come closest to fact. And one can so easily look at a giraffe while continuing to believe that there ain't no such animal.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

# FILMS

## Screen Actors: Class B

*Hollywood, April 2*

ON Hollywood Boulevard it has recently been possible to observe a picket patrolling the entrance of the discreet office building which houses the Hays office. This time, however, it was not the Hays office which was attracting the attention of the picket, but Central Casting. Central Casting is an organization, also sponsored by the producers, which handles all the extras in Hollywood and with which anybody who hopes to obtain work as an extra, at any of the studios, must be registered. The picket represented a disgruntled band of extras, mostly old-timers, who maintained that Central Casting was unfairly favoring certain picked extras, was neglecting the old-timers, and should hand out what work there was in more even proportions. These accusations have just been investigated by the Screen Actors Guild and found unsubstantiated.

Central Casting considers the whole affair most annoying. A gentleman in the office was very angry. "Nowadays all you have to do," he said, "is go get a sign printed to make all the trouble you want to." He went on to explain that Central Casting was pretty helpless as regards apportioning work. Old-timers suffer from old age and the greatest demand is for young extras; the studios, as part of their war-time economy campaign, are cutting down on the number of extras used in crowd scenes, and work which was scarce before is today even scarcer now that the foreign markets are shut down; and moreover

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directors often ask by name for the extras they require. It is this which leads to a conviction amongst many of the extras that favoritism rather than talent determines the choice of who shall work, which is as a matter of fact to a certain degree true. But, as the gentleman at Central Casting pointed out, directors naturally prefer to work with extras whom they know and can rely upon.

Since the days when D. W. Griffiths employed most of the population of Hollywood for weeks at a time to represent Babylonians or Israelites in gigantic spectacles, conditions for the extra have changed very much. A note at the top of the form that every applicant to Central Casting must fill in reads: "Since January 2, 1926, Central Casting Corporation has continuously called to the attention of those engaging in extra work this statement, 'The great variation of types of picture made, requiring all races and nationalities, children, etc. makes extra employment most casual. It may be months before a picture will be made requiring your services. There is no guarantee of work.' Nevertheless there are some 7,000 people registered as extras at Central Casting. On any one day it is very rare to find more than about 600 working; the maximum number employed last year was 1,300 and fell on occasions as low as about 70 per day."

Everyone who is registered at Central Casting must be a member of the Screen Actors Guild to which they have to pay, as Class-B members, an entrance fee of $50, and $18 a year dues. Of the 7,000 registrants about 2,000 might possibly make a living wage (Central Casting is doubtful) and a mere handful might make anything like good money. A really flourishing top-flight dress extra (an extra with an elaborate and expensive wardrobe) might make as much as $3,000 a year but not more than five or six in the entire industry are doing it. Having joined the Guild it is then necessary to provide Central Casting with two photographs (full face and profile) and a mass of personal information. The classification form includes questions as to whether your eyes are crossed, whether you can throw a boomerang, if you can hunt (fox), and if your previous occupation was that of clergyman or gambler. After filling in the form you are then classified, filed, indexed, cross-indexed, and put in one of the four categories of extras which, according to their possessions or accomplishments, get various salaries a day—$16.50, $11, $8.25, or $5.50. The $16.50-a-day class consists exclusively of dress extras wearing formal evening attire; other classifications are rather arbitrary, but, roughly speaking, $11 a day are paid for good-looking dress extras not in formal attire, dance extras, and extras representing the *beau monde* in general; the $8.25 group represents a drop in the social scale but a fairly good all-round appearance, while $5.50 is paid for ordinary crowd work. Any extra who says so much as a word of dialogue, or a dance extra who does any solo or adagio work (throwing your partner around), gets $25 a day.

This sounds fairly good until it is pointed out that the greater part of an extra's life is spent not in the studio but on the telephone. About 2,000 extras spend their day telephoning Central Casting at least once an hour to ask if any demand has come in from the studios for their services. The telephone operators at Central Casting broadcast their names through to the filing department where calls from the studios are received on teletype machines; if the extra is required he is told to report at the studio but far more often than not he is told to call back later. Since Central Casting sometimes gets a rush call from the studios and rings the extras, most of them are so nervous about missing something that they either spend the day at home beside the telephone or employ a service to relay their calls wherever they may be. And any extra who works more than about three days a fortnight is very lucky indeed.

That this is a miserable form of making a living can be very easily seen. The Guild has already accomplished much for the extras, having, for instance, raised the minimum daily wage from $3.50 to $5.50, but there still remains a great deal to be done. The extras would be in a position to hurry things up a bit were they not so divided amongst themselves. For example, there is a continuous feud between the dance and dress extras: dress extras are often to be seen in films immaculately attired in evening dress ($16.50 a day), expressing polite amusement at the hectic activities of dance extras ($11 a day), which seems to the dance extras most unfair. Moreover, the various classifications are continually trespassing on each other's territories (dress extras dancing polkas, etc.) and so it would seem that in order to make the extras' life tolerable there will have to be drastic revisions in the methods of hiring and classification.

### CHRISTENING PARTY

A few days ago the press was asked to a party to choose the title of William Dieterle's latest production based on the *Saturday Evening Post* story, "The Devil and Daniel Webster," by Stephen Vincent Benét. The party was held on a sound stage decorated to represent several acres of New England farm land. On the set were two houses, two barns, several carts, some livestock, and a great deal of mud. The only oasis of dry land was temporarily occupied for the filming of a final sequence of the picture (which to judge by the squeals of the livestock must have represented a mass slaughter). Later when the party waded to dry land the livestock was found to be tranquilly alive and the party proceeded most pleasantly with the assistance of refreshments and an orchestra. Mr. Dieterle related the story of his picture, which he said everyone liked, though few approved of the title. Meanwhile, forms were being handed out with a list of substitutes which included "Temptation," "The Devil to Pay," and "A Certain Mr. Scratch." Given these alternatives the press almost unanimously chose "The Devil and Daniel Webster."

### RECENT FILMS

Ernst Lubitsch has always been the protagonist of the eccentric and the champion of the individualist, but "That Uncertain Feeling" finds him poking rather heavy fun at artists and psychoanalysts on the side of the dreariest of commonplace husbands, and deserting rococo for modern-hotel-style décor. Merle Oberon and Melvyn Douglas, in an atmosphere intended to represent chic sophistication, gambol within the bounds of wedlock and decorum, and Burgess Meredith as a pianist with "artistic" temperament causes some slight amusement and distraction. Mr. Lubitsch is so much more at home against a European background that he should be banished, cinematically, from American soil for life.

"The Lady from Cheyenne" gets away to a bad start by giving the impression that it is going to be just another spectacle of the bold bad West with virtue, law, and order triumphant once more over Edward Arnold. However, with the arrival of ravishing Loretta Young on the scene and with the aid of some excellent and amusing dialogue the prospect brightens considerably and the film turns out to be a very enjoyable little fable about woman suffrage. The picture is highly recommended for a pleasant and emotionally undisturbed evening.

ANTHONY BOWER

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# Letters to the Editors

## This England

*Dear Sirs:* The January 11 and 18 issues of *The Nation* have just arrived here. I found the Lerner-Schuman-Dennis correspondence particularly interesting. Lerner keeps his head. I don't quite know what "democracy" is—but as Nevinson once said, "We know freedom when we don't see it," and as long as men are willing to die for it there is still hope for the world. We are already relatively a socialist state here, and shall become more so, when we feel the real pinch of the cost of the war. There is far greater equality of *spendable* income than there was—and far fewer profiteers than in the last war—because very soon all surplus income over a modest limit will have to go on the war. I'm surprised the rich don't kick more than they do. It is partly because they fear Hitler more than they fear losing their money—partly because the *Blitz* is teaching many that life is sweet even in a 7′ x 4′ shelter. Of course there are still grave inequities and inequalities, but they are increasingly resented. After the war, of course, the devil will cease to be a monk.

Is there still freedom here? Well, there's still a remarkable amount of it. We've not yet jailed all our Communists—only some of them—and God knows they've asked for it. The wholesale internment of aliens raised a righteous storm that has resulted in a much more liberal policy. But a country in which Churchill, the King, and any minister can wander freely about among dockers and others without a noticeable bodyguard and get heartily cheered, cannot fairly be described as unfree.

Is Britain fighting for freedom or Empire? Well, of course it is in fact fighting for survival—and that goes for all of us. The survival of Britain means the survival of the "non-conformist conscience," of heretics, humanitarians, and generally of the salt of the earth.

I should judge that America hovering on the brink is less happy than Britain. I at any rate am much happier now that we are standing up to Hitler than when we were trying to live as escapist isolationists, dabbling in the disgrace of "non-intervention" in Spain, China, Czechoslovakia, etc. All that worries me is the revival of anti-German feeling that we got in the last war (though on a somewhat less rabid and stupid scale, perhaps?), and the knowledge that bitter experience has not yet been bitter enough to teach the average man a little practical Christianity and common sense. It is of course the erstwhile "appeasers" who have now become the racial fire-eaters—the strange and perverted working of a guilty conscience, no doubt.

JOSIAH WEDGWOOD, JR.

Staffordshire, England, Feb. 18

## Democracy Must Work

*Dear Sirs:* As one whose ancestors fled from tyranny to find freedom in a new land, may I make a plea for us to guard as with our life the rights and freedom of all within our shores. Let us adhere to the letter of the word as it was intended—I mean of freedom—freedom of thought, belief, religion, politics. It must be clear to you as it is to me that this freedom is as threatened today here as it was in Germany when Hitler came to power. As it began there with attacks on Communists, so here we have removed to a safe place the head of the Communists, Earl Browder; we have imprisoned men and women for exercising their right to petition for the ballot; we are carrying on a strange and undemocratic investigation in our schools that results in the firing and arrest of one man because he did not believe as certain people would like him to. And now labor is coming in for its share of persecution with one fine Representative going so far as to advocate the electric chair for strikers!

Where are we headed? Into a deep blackness—unless we make our democracy work as our fathers intended it to.

PHOEBE BRAND

New York, April 1

## Books Wanted

*Dear Sirs:* A campaign is now under way to secure books for the newly completed library of the five lodges of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee comprising the employees of the Tennessee Coal, Iron and Railroad Company at Fairfield, Alabama.

The library which has been established in the joint headquarters of the five organizations is the first attempt to furnish members of C. I. O. organizations with reading material which cannot be found in the regular libraries of Alabama. Not only are the libraries of our state few and poorly stocked with material expressive of liberal and progressive ideas, but they are inaccessible to the vast majority of workers.

The cost of providing books of this kind is far beyond our limited means and we are therefore appealing to outstanding liberals and educators for a donation of one book, or more, which will go toward filling the shelves of our library.

Any donation will help to mold the ideas of the workers of our district—today in the forefront of the battle for economic security and freedom in the South. The address is The Steel Workers Library, C. I. O. Hall, 5305 Valley Road, Fairfield, Alabama, and we would be glad if you would autograph your gift.

W. H. CRAWFORD

Birmingham, Ala., March 29

*Dear Sirs:* In this time of national emergency I hope you will consider that maintaining the morale of American merchant seamen is important to national defense.

Merchant seamen do not have the library privileges afforded to civilians, nor even to soldiers and sailors. If you would bring our need for books to the attention of your readers, I feel sure this would be a worthwhile contribution not only to seamen, but also to national security. HERBERT L. HOWE, Librarian

New York, April 2

## Do We Need Rhythm?

*Dear Sirs:* We in this country (including the highest statesmen, educators, and ministers) do not seem to have a clear idea of just what democracy is. We criticize the idea of a dictatorship and say we want none of that in America. We say, "We want the American democratic way over here."

But if we should analyze carefully and boil things down, we should find that fascism does not set up a cruel, ruthless dictatorship form of life. Rather, it founds really just another form of democracy. A totalitarian dictatorship is, strange as it may sound, a democracy.

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The fascist countries merely employ a dictator to see that democratic principles prevail. He calls the beat and maintains the cadence and rhythm of democracy in his country. He is there to discipline those groups or individuals who get out of step, those who would "chisel" or act unfairly toward the whole social group, those who would assume disproportionate or undeserved importance, those who would destroy the harmony of the nation.

But, in this country, we do not like the idea of being disciplined, of ever being called out of step. The idea of discipline really is the heart of the matter.

It looks very much as though Hitler will come to set up a disciplined democracy for us unless we set it up for ourselves before he gets here. There must be order and there will be order, regardless of who sets it up. Of that, we may be certain.

REV. WAYNE H. STEELE

Chicago, April 1

## Communists and Unions

*Dear Sirs:* Your recent comments on Communists and unions were amusing and irritating. You wrote on March 1, for example, that "Until two weeks ago this blight (i. e., Communist influence in the Teachers Union) was treated pretty much in the spirit of Mark Twain's remark about the weather. Everybody talked about it but nobody did anything."

From November, 1932, to April, 1933, I was a member of a committee of five elected by the membership of the Teachers Union to investigate Communist factionalism in the union. Another member of the committee was Charles J. Hendley, the present president. The chairman was John Dewey, who wrote the final report.

That report, issued April 29, 1933, analyzed the situation then facing the union, and urged remedial measures. The union held a large membership meeting, at which the recommendations in the report were debated. Some of them were adopted.

When matters became progressively worse, we decided on a major operation. Nothing else, we were convinced, could save the cause of unionism and liberalism among teachers. So, in 1935, we petitioned the American Federation of Teachers to grant us the power of reorganizing our local. To our members and to the A. F. of T. we analyzed the situation in much the same manner as the writer of your article, but more thoroughly. The convention of the A. F. of T., which was held at Cleveland in August, 1935, rejected our petition. And thereupon we organized the Teachers Guild.

Now, between 1933 and 1935, did we get the support of *The Nation,* the *Post,* and other organs of liberal opinion? Quite the contrary. It was explained in those journals that we were impatient with minority opinion, that we were seeking to retain power by undemocratic methods, that we were "red-baiting, etc." *The Nation,* with its tremendous influence among liberals, could have assisted us in our struggle against the well-organized program and unscrupulous tactics of the Communists in our union. But in those days *The Nation* and the *Post* were catering to the party line.

MAX KLINE

New York, March 29

## Millions for Defense

*Dear Sirs:* Several of *The Nation's* comments on ways and means of financing national defense have suggested to me some of the following thoughts on this important problem:

Let Congress tax incomes of a total of 25 per cent of the nation's annual income, a sum which, according to Dr. Harold G. Moulton, is ample for all needs and will enable us to pay as we go for armaments, the tax to be so arranged that the heaviest burden falls on those best able to pay. However, since the burden will fall heavily on a great many, let the government issue "tax-refund warrants" for a certain part of the taxes paid, say, 50 per cent (to people in the lower income brackets), these warrants to bear interest at a rate to discourage speculation in them, and to be paid off within a specified number of years after the national defense emergency has come to an end.

Now, assuming that the government will have to spend huge sums for four years, it will have to raise the equivalent of the nation's income for one year. About 5 per cent of this sum will be represented by tax warrants payable in ten years or so. It will therefore be necessary to continue the high tax rate long enough to enable the government to refund the sum of these tax warrants when due, with interest. The tax rate may be reduced, of course, as the fund raised for the repayment of these warrants increases, and no further warrants would be issued.

In this manner, it seems to me, many evils will be avoided and the costs of rearmament met out of taxes. I assume that the person holding a tax refund warrant will be able to borrow money on it if necessary, so that the high rate of the tax will not be felt so keenly. It may be possible to issue stamps or other negotiable paper for the amount of the tax refund, but, since stamps will be equal to money, that may tend to bring on a certain amount of inflation while the effect of tax-refund warrants will be that of borrowing future taxes from the taxpayer and refunding them with interest.

F. J. OSTROW

New York, April 2

## Correction

Last week Charles Duff was described in this column as a British writer who "has served as Press Officer of the British Foreign Office for eighteen years." Mr. Duff did occupy this post at one time but has not served in that capacity for several years.


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